

FIRST LOVE  
AND  
PÚNIN AND BABÚRIN.

BY  
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TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN, BY PERMISSION OF  
THE AUTHOR,

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION.

BY  
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## N O T E .

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THE transliteration of Russian words into our alphabet is not a difficult task when once a uniform method is adopted. At present, however, Russian names and words come to us in different guises, I might say disguises, according to the medium of transmission. Telegrams from Paris speak of Tourguenef, while those from Germany speak of Turgenjew. Mr. Henry James, in his charming essay in the *North American Review*, talks of Inssarow, Schubin, Turgéniew, Ewlampia Charlow, Lawretzky, &c. He has adopted more or less exactly the German spelling, which thoroughly misleads the English reader who is unacquainted with the German language, or does not guess that German pronunciation is intended. Ewlampia Charlow, pronounced by a German, is correct enough ; but an Englishman ought to pronounce the words so written Yulampia Tsharlo, which is absurd. I should write the words in English, Evlampya Kharlov. It is best to represent each Russian letter by the English equivalent of its normal value. It is

inadvisable to attempt to reproduce in English every nuance of pronunciation. That must be left for the reader, if he can. If he cannot he is no worse off than an Englishman who thinks that Gownod, or Dawdet, is the correct pronunciation of Gounod or Daudet. No one would think of writing Goono or Doday for such a person. People often exclaim at the "number of consonants" in Russian words, not knowing that it is due to transliteration. I have seen Shchedrin written (in the German fashion) Schtschedrin! No wonder that Russian is considered by many to be a "fearful" language. The consonants *b, v, g, d, z, k, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, f* (or *ph*), *ts, sh, ch, shch* (made up by joining the two preceding consonants), require no notice. *Ch* is, of course, pronounced as in Church, and *shch* as the *sh* in English Church. *G* is in some cases pronounced *v*, in others *h*; I always write it *g*. The Russian letter which is pronounced like the French *j*, I write *zh*; the letter pronounced very nearly like the German *ch*, I write *kh*. The letter *yer* (*tvërdi znak*), which gives a hard sound to the preceding consonant, I do not render, because the hard sound is usually given by Englishmen, where that letter would enforce it. The soft *yer* (*miágki znak*), I render in the middle of words by *y*, at the end not at all, because it is, I fancy, unrenderable without confusion. The vowel *a* I always render by *a* (as in *father*), though it is sometimes otherwise pronounced. *O* I render by *o* as in *vote*; *e* by *e* as in *led*, or by *ë* when it is to be pronounced *o* or *yo* (the double-dotted *e* is often used in Russian in the same

manner) ; the Russian *u* I render by *u* as in *glue* or *rude* ; the vowel *yerui* I render, but only approximately, by *ui* (*u* in *bull*, and *i* in *wit*). *Ya* and *yu* (*u* as in *bull*), require no remarks. *I*, by which I render both *i* and *izhe*, is to be pronounced as in *Kincardine*, to give rather a far-fetched illustration. The mute *i* (*izhe s krátkoi*), I render by *i*, except where it follows an *i*, in which case it is un-renderable. The letter *yat*, I render by *ye*. The accent placed on each word is the tonic accent, which is very strongly emphasized in Russian. When the tonic accent falls on *e* I indicate it by means of *· ·* placed upon that letter ; it is then pronounced *o* or *yo* when so accentuated.

In conclusion I may state that I have followed almost exactly the system of transliteration in use in the British Museum Catalogue.

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## IVÁN S. TURGÉNEV.

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RUSSIAN literature has as yet given to the world but one great name, that of Turgénev. Others there are assuredly in the literature of Russia who command the deep respect and admiration of all who know them and their works. But they belong to their country and not to the world: Iván Sergyéevich Turgénev belongs to both. Naturally, and without an effort, he takes his place beside Scott, Balzac, Thackeray, Dickens, George Sand, George Eliot, to mention the universal novelists of the century. But Púshkin scarcely ranks, or deserves to rank, with the greatest poets, with Byron, for instance, whom he most resembles; nor is Koltsóv, the Burns of Russia, universally recognised as a songster of the highest order, which he certainly is. Turgénev alone has become known to readers of every nation; and to most of us Turgénev is Russian literature. It cannot but be regretted that so much ignorance should exist with regard to so fine and curious a

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literature as that of Russia ; but it is satisfactory to reflect that, if it is to be embodied for us in the person of a single writer, no one so well deserves to be that writer as the author of *A Sportsman's Note-book*,\* and *Fathers and Sons*, whom Russia has just lost. It is not always that foreign opinion bestows its favour upon the most deserving. This recognition of his pre-eminence is due to real merit, and not to any such trivial causes as his prolonged residence in western Europe, or his mastery of French and German. These may have hastened his attainment of universal fame, but they did nothing more. Of course a prose-writer has an advantage over a poet in being more easily translatable. His thoughts can be expressed in a foreign tongue with such a close adherence to the form in which they were originally set forth, as it is hopeless to attempt to obtain in the case of a poet. It is no easy task, assuredly, to translate the magical prose of M. Turgénev ; it is, however, an incomparably easier one than to translate the poetry of Púshkin, or Koltsóv.

But Russian literature is peculiarly rich in writers of fiction, and as regards foreign recognition they and Turgénev have stood upon the same footing. Goncharóv, Pisémski, S. T. Aksákov, Dostoévski, Counts L. and A. Tolstói, and even the great Gógol are scarcely known, or known only by name, to English readers. They are all novelists of very considerable ability ; the first and the last three of them

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\* *Zapiski Okhótnika and Ottsúi i Dyétui.*

especially would do honour to any literature. But they are not read and enjoyed abroad as is Iván Sergyéevich. Is it that the choice of subjects has made M. Turgénev's novels so peculiarly acceptable to Western readers? Essentially, every one of his novels and stories is Russian. They are Russian in thought and style, and the world in which the characters live and move is a Russian world.

By an astonishing misconception the English translation of M. Turgénev's *Smoke*\* bears the sub-title "Life in Baden-Baden." The scene of the novel is laid for the most part at that charming German town-village, where Iván Sergyéevich lived for a long time; but Baden-Baden is in *Smoke* as Russian at least as St. Petersburg. And the highest art demands that it should be so. M. Turgénev's writings, then, are as Russian as those of Gógol or Goncharóv. It is to no secondary cause that the author of the following stories owes his position; it is to his indisputable genius, and his consummate art. Nikolái Gógol was certainly a satirist and humourist of the highest order; his comedy, the *Revisór*,† is full of biting satire and humorous situations;‡ and his *Dead Souls* is a novel abounding in sarcasm, boisterous humour, and tragic scenes. But Gógol had not M. Turgénev's range, nor could he handle his subjects, as does the author of *Smoke*, in such a way as to efface all differences of nationality between writer and reader.

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\* *Duim*.

† Mr. Sutherland Edwards gives an excellent account of this work in his *Russians at Home and Abroad*.

‡ *Mértvuiya Dúshi*.

You cannot forget that Gógol is a Russian; you only know of Turgénev that he has sounded all the depths of human nature. M. Turgénev, too, is a Russian to the back-bone; but he speaks the language of the whole world. Before going any further in my humble estimate of his literary position, it will be as well if I state to the reader a few biographical facts concerning the author of the following stories.

Iván Sergyéevich Turgénev was born the 28th of October, 1818, at Orël, in the government of that name. His father, Sergyéi Níkoláevich Turgénev, was an officer in the Elizavetgrad cuirassiers, and retired with the rank of colonel. Whilst quartered in Orël, he made the acquaintance of his future wife, Varvára Petrónna Lutovínova, whom he married there. The Turgénevs, an old noble family, have always borne an honoured name in Russia. Stein told Nikolái N. Turgénev, the uncle of Iván Sergyéevich, that his name was a "synonym of honour and devotion"; and to him Alexander von Humboldt wrote in 1854: "Your name is associated in this country with many respectful memories, and held in high esteem."\* It is a curious fact that it was one of the Turgénevs—Yakof—who, in 1700, on New Year's Day, was charged with the cutting off of the boyárs' beards, by Peter's orders.

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\* See *Die Russische Gesellschaft*, or the French translation thereof, *La Société Russe*; an anonymous publication, of which the author is well known. It contains an interesting account of our author and his two uncles, Nikolái and Alexander.

Like Iván Sergyéevich, the colonel, Sergyéi Nikoláevich, was the second of three brothers. The elder, Alexander, and the younger, Nikolái, both became famous, while Sergyéi remained, on leaving the army, a quiet country gentleman of liberal views, who took a great interest in the education of his children. Alexander, who died in 1845, was for some years the occupant of a high post in the Ministry of Education and Public Worship, under Prince Galítsuin, and exercised a very salutary liberalising influence. He was forced, however, to resign in 1822, with his enlightened chief, when the enlightened period of Alexander's reign came to an end. But he continued to serve the State, without abandoning his Liberal attitude. He it was who, after many years of superhuman labour in Russian and foreign archives, published, in 1842, the *Historiae Russiae Monumenta*, which have proved of such enormous service to the historian and the lawyer. Alexander Turgénev, in the course of his travels, was at Abbotsford in August 1828, and spent a couple of days with Scott. He gives a charming account in his correspondence.\*

Iván's second uncle, Nikolái Turgénev, the younger brother of Alexander, who died at Paris in 1873 at upwards of eighty years of age, was a very distinguished economist and statesman, who was unfortunately banished from his native country, on the accession of the Tsar Nicholas in 1825, for having belonged to a Liberal Society

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\* Published at Leipzig in 1872.

which had been dissolved some years before. He studied at Göttingen; and, whilst still a very young man, travelled in Europe to a considerable extent. His knowledge of Germany and things German was so thorough, that in 1813, when he was but twenty-three years of age, he was appointed a member of the Commission, presided over by Stein, which was charged with the administration of the German territories which were under the power of the Allies. He ever remained an ardent admirer of the great Prussian reformer. He was the author of a treatise on taxation, which created a great sensation in Russia by its boldness; of a most valuable work on Russia—*La Russie et Les Russes*\*—full of acute criticism; and a small book (in Russian) on Russia under the Tsar, Alexander II., *Chego zhelat dlya Rossii?*† In his treatise on taxation he asserted the imperative necessity of emancipating the serfs, a measure which his nephew, Iván Sergyéevich, was to help forward so brilliantly. Alexander II. granted him a pardon, so that he was able to return to his native country; but he never settled in Russia.

To return to Iván Sergyéevich:

In 1820, Iván's parents and their children went abroad, spending some years travelling in different parts of Europe. On returning to Russia, they settled at Madame Turgénev's country seat in the Mtsenski district of the Orël Government.

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\* Bruxelles, 1847.

† *What is to be desired for Russia?* 1868.

In 1830 they removed to Moscow, where Iván Sergyéevich, now twelve years old, was put to school. The children of the nobility were seldom sent to the Gymnasias in those days, so young Ivan went to a private school, where he was prepared for the Moscow University, which he entered at the age of sixteen. The private education of young nobles at that time was worth very little. The only things that were properly taught were foreign languages, which have always been much cultivated in Russia. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that Iván Sergyéevich knew French and German before he knew Russian. Up to the time of his going to school, he was surrounded by governesses and tutors, from whom he learned those indispensable tongues, and with whom he read the French and German classics. But he picked up his first ideas of Russian literature and culture by chance from an eccentric servant, who is probably portrayed to us in *Púnin*; for the *Rossiáda* of Kheraskov was the first Russian book that Iván Sergyéevich ever read. My readers will see in *Púnin* and *Babúrin* that Púnin was an enthusiastic admirer of that grandiloquent work. While at school, M. Turgénev added English to the living languages of which he was master. Thus on entering Moscow University, at the age of sixteen, he knew the three chief living languages of the world. And he wanted those languages! Not only were the best text books on all subjects to be found in them; but when he had gone through his university course and taken his degree, he was obliged, like hundreds of other young

Russian graduates, to go to Germany to "finish." It should be remarked that Iván Sergyéevich left Moscow University on the death of his father in 1835, and went to the University of St. Petersburg, where he graduated in 1838. At both places he entered the Philological Faculty. He took the ordinary degree of *kandidat*, conferring rank or a *Chin* of the tenth class. On leaving St. Petersburg University, he went to that of Berlin.

The Russian universities of those days were in a wretched condition, without life or light. There were not wanting men of ability among the professors, but the teaching was worth but little: it wanted thoroughness, depth, and grasp. Young men left the university with a supply of superficial knowledge of no particular value. In his *Memoirs*, M. Turgénev says, *à propos* of his going to Berlin:—

"I was convinced that in Russia it was only possible to acquire preparatory instruction, and that the real fountain of knowledge was abroad. Among the then professors of the St. Petersburg University, there was not one who could have shaken this conviction of mine. Indeed, they all shared it. It was nourished by the Ministry of Public Instruction itself, at the head of which stood Count Uvárov, who sent young men to the German universities on his own account. At Berlin I spent about two years. Philosophy and the ancient languages, I studied; devoting myself with particular zeal to Hegel, under Professor Werder. As a proof of the insufficiency of the instruction provided for us by our highest

institutions, I will mention the following fact : at Berlin I was attending the lectures of Zumpt on Roman antiquities, and those of Bœckh on Greek literature, whilst I was obliged to work up my Greek and Latin grammar, which I knew very badly. And I was not one of the worst graduates."

Such a state of things was well calculated to produce considerable discontent among the higher classes of Russia. The young man who left his country to "finish," could not help seeing how much better "they did those things abroad."

At another part of his *Memoirs*, M. Turgénev writes : "The rush abroad of young people of my own age reminded me of the early Slavs, who sought for their leaders among the Variági on the coast. Each of us felt in the same way that his land (I am not speaking of the country generally, but of the moral and intellectual inheritance of the individual) was large and fertile, but that it was without order. Speaking for myself, I may say that I clearly felt the disadvantages of such a separation from my native soil, of such a violent tearing asunder of all the ties which bound me to the order of things amidst which I was brought up . . . but there was nothing to be done. That order of things, that *milieu*, and especially that zone thereof, if I may so express myself, in which I was brought up—namely, that of landowners and serf-owners—did not constitute any such attraction as could have kept me back. On the contrary, nearly everything that I saw around me disturbed me, excited my indignation, and at length became repul-



sive to me. I could not hesitate long. I had either to reconcile myself and to peacefully follow the common rut in the well-worn road; or with one effort to push away and tear myself away from everybody and everything, even running the risk of losing much that was dear to me and lay near my heart. This I did. Head foremost, I plunged into the 'German Sea' which was to purify and regenerate me; and when at length I issued from its waves, I found myself all the same a 'Zapádnik,'\* which I have remained ever since."

This remark throws considerable light on M. Turgénev's character and position towards Russia. He is often spoken of as a man who had half renounced his country, and did not care for it; as a man who has lost his nationality. Nothing is more false. It is customary to speak of Heinrich Heine in the same way, and with no more accuracy. France claims both as her sons; but then France is ready to claim Meyerbeer and Rossini, and nearly every foreign genius who has lived in Paris; so that we need not consider French pretensions.† M. Turgénev calls himself a "Zapádnik," and in a good sense of that word he is one. But the most superficial reader of his works will not fail to see that he loves his country well,

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\* Literally, a "Westerner." The term has been always applied to Russians who are imbued with western ideas and culture, and are anxious to westernize (if one may so say) Russia.

† I may mention, as an amusing fact, that the Paris *Figaro*, some months ago, crowned Mr. Gladstone's career by remarking that he was *presque digne d'être français*!

and is a thorough Russian. He does not direct his irony against the foibles of his countrymen in order to depreciate them in the eyes of the world. He is, on the contrary only desirous of correcting those weaknesses of his countrymen, and of redressing the wrongs of the country which he loves. So, at least, I cannot help understanding the writings of M. Turgénev.

During his submersion in the "German Sea" Iván Sergyéevich contracted an affection for, and established *bonnes relations* with, Germany, which have not grown less with the lapse of time. In Germany he is as popular as he is in his own country, and better understood, perhaps, than in any other foreign country, despite the pretty general prejudice against Russia which exists there. In France M. Turgénev is for most people above all a great stylist. In Germany he is that also, but he is chiefly a great painter of morals; the man who has brought to light the ills and woes of his country, and especially the odious features of serfdom.

M. Turgénev returned from Germany in 1841, and settled for a while in Moscow, where his mother was living, making there many literary acquaintances. It is little use mentioning names to English readers without giving some account of their significance—which would lead me too far. From Moscow Iván Sergyéevich went, after some time, to St. Petersburg, where he entered the Civil Service, like most Russians of his rank. But after a year's work in the Ministry of the Interior, he withdrew

from official life, and finally adopted the profession of letters.

While a student at St. Petersburg he had written a tragedy, a "slavish imitation of Byron's *Manfred*," as he himself styles it. He showed it to P. A. Plétnev, the Professor of Russian Literature at the University. Plétnev delighted Iván Sergyéevich by saying that there was "something in him." But his real *début* in literature took place in 1843. Of this M. Turgénev gives the following account in his *Memoirs*:—

"Somewhere about Easter in 1843, there happened an event, in itself most insignificant, and buried long ago already in oblivion. There appeared, namely, a not very long poem, by a certain T. L., called *Parásha*.\* That T. L. was I; with that poem I made my first step in the career of literature. . . . The day on which I was leaving St. Petersburg for the country, I went to Byélin'ski's (I knew where he lived, but had not visited him, and had met him twice in all at the houses of friends), and without giving my name, left a copy of my poem with his servant. I spent about two months in the country, where I received the May number of *Otéchestvennuiya Zapiski*.† Therein I read a long criticism of my poem by Byélin'ski. He was well disposed towards me, and praised me so much, that I was more agitated than delighted. I could not believe my eyes, and when in Moscow the late T. V. Kiryéevski came

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\* Diminutive of Praskovia.

† *Annals of the Fatherland*—one of the best Russian reviews.

and congratulated me, I hastened to escape, assuring him that I was not the author of *Parásha*. On returning to St. Petersburg, I went, of course, to see Byéliniski, and our friendship then began."

Before giving any further extracts from the *Memoirs*, it will perhaps be advisable to say a few words about Vissáron Grigoryévich Byéliniski, one of the best known figures in modern Russian literature—the first of Russian critics.

Byéliniski was born in 1811, and died in 1848, of consumption. His father was a country doctor, who was able, however, to give his son a very fair education. But foreign languages the critic was never proficient in; even French he read with difficulty, and, as M. Turgénev tells us, Byéliniski's life was devoted to literature and literary criticism. He wisely gave up writing poetry, while still quite a young man, feeling that he was not meant to be a poet. In his early days, when he was settled and writing in Moscow, he seems to have been narrow and one-sided in his judgments. For instance, as M. Plevói tells us in his *History of Russian Literature*\*, when he was under the influence of an undigested Hegelianism, he carried his exaction of an "Olympian, objective, and calm contemplation of life" in a poet, to the extent of only recognising three really great poets in the world—Shakespeare, Goethe,

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\* I take this opportunity of acknowledging my debt to M. P. Plevói for the assistance which his excellent work (*Istóriya Rússkoy Literatúrni, 3e Isdaniè*, St. Petersburg, 1878) has afforded me in the writing of this short biography.

and Púshkin! But his views altered and matured, especially when he left Moscow and the *Teleskop* for Petersburg and the *Otéchestvennuiya Zapiski*. He seems gradually to have come to adopt a theory of poetry not unlike that suggested by Mr. Matthew Arnold, when he declared that "criticism of life" was the business of the poet. With this change of view, with the exchange of the principle of "art for art" for that of "art for life" (*iskússtvo dlya zhízni*), Byélinski came to interest himself more deeply in social and political questions. He was a zealous champion of the rights of women, as they were understood in his days by would-be reformers. Unhappily, no man in Russia can be more than an amateur or *dilettante* in politics, unless he be one of the few whose position enables them to aspire to ministerial office. The Russians are often reproached with being theorists and smatterers. The reproach is not altogether unfounded, but it is undeserved, if I may say so without self-contradiction. Is it to be wondered at if men, living as they do in a condition of political subjection, with no responsibilities and no rights, should be fond of that dreamland where the Censorship is powerless, and should be lacking in that steadfastness of thought and endeavour, which can only exist where a man's acts produce their natural results unimpeded. The perpetual ineffectuality of one's efforts will inevitably overcome him, unless his spirit be of the bravest. Byélinski it was who introduced, as one may almost say, Gógol and M. Turgénev, the two

greatest novelists of Russia, to the Russian public ; while his influence on the writers, who were contemporary with M. Turgénev—on Goncharóv, Nekrásov, &c.—was decided. They were, in a literary sense, brought up on his criticism, as M. Polevói puts it. He was ever the first to discover and encourage rising talent. His clear perception, his true ear, and almost unerring judgment, made him the safest of guides and advisers ; the influence of his matured mind liberalising and strengthening ; and, though devoting himself mainly to literature, he contributed not a little to produce that state of things and minds which made the reforms of the Tsar-Emancipator possible and necessary. He is remembered with gratitude by his countrymen. He is a landmark in Russian literature. He introduced the modern “natural school” of Russian authors, as the founder of which he considered Gógol. His criticisms of Herzen, Goncharóv, Púshkin, Lérmontov, Koltsóv, &c., may be recommended as samples of the best school of Russian criticism.

Byélinski—the first and greatest of Russian critics—it was who welcomed young M. Turgénev into the career of letters. It is not difficult to imagine how great must have been the delight of the *débutant* at the terms in which he was mentioned.

Of *Parásha*, and M. Turgénev’s other poetical works, *A Conversation*,\* &c., I need say but little. They cannot

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\* *Razgovór*, 1845.

be obtained either in Russian or translated, and their author would have nothing to do with them. M. Vengérov, who has written the completest study of M. Turgénev which has yet appeared, tells us (p. 111, part I.)\* that after fruitlessly endeavouring to obtain a copy of *Parásha*, he wrote to the author to ask him if he would lend him one. M. Turgénev replied that he had not got the "old rubbish" (*stáruiy khlam*). *Parásha* is a simple story of a young country girl, who falls in love with a neighbour, whom she meets by chance, and marries him—a very prosaic termination for those Byronic and "fatal" days in which the poem appeared. The charm of the work lies in the exquisite descriptions and pictures which it contains, and the delicate irony of the author's comments. It is written in a graceful metre, which is very successfully handled throughout. A great command of language is displayed. It certainly does not rank as a poem as high as *A Nest of Nobles*, or *Fathers and Sons* as a novel; but it would be inconceivable that it should have been practically suppressed by M. Turgénev, did we not know the extraordinary errors into which authors fall when they estimate their own works.

Referring to a superficial resemblance between *Parásha* and some works of Púshkin and Lérmontov (notably, the former's *Onyégín*), Byéliniski says† (p. 10):—"There is so

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\* *Rússkaya Literatúra v eya sovreménnykh predstavítelyakh. Kritisikobigraphicheskie etiúdui Semëna Vengérova.* 2 Chásti. S. Petersbúrg, 1875.

† The criticism is in vol. xxviii. of the *Otéchest. Zap.*, for 1843, at p. 1 of *Bibliographicheskaya Khronika*.

much life and poetry in Mr. T. L.'s verses, so much sincerity and truth in his reflections, that any idea of imitation is absurd. The whole poem is so penetrated by a strict unity of thought, tone, and colour, and is so well sustained, that it shows its author not only to possess creative talent, but a strong and mature talent, which gives him a mastery over his subject." At the end of his review he says: "God grant that our meeting with the talent of the author of *Parásha* may not be . . . a casual one, but may become a long and lasting friendship. It would be sad to think that such a talent were nothing more than the effervescence of young blood, an ebullition of youth, and not a sign of a vocation, and could deceive the hopes and expectations which it has aroused, as the heroine of the poem deceived the author."

As remarked before, Iván Sergyéevich read Byéliniski's criticism when he was in the country; on his return to St. Petersburg he called on Byéliniski. They soon became fast friends. Ever searching after truth, as the phrase is, interested in every effort of the human intellect, Byéliniski, who knew no foreign language and "read even French with great trouble," was delighted to reap information from the conversation of friends, "not finding anything in Russian books to satisfy his curiosity." This is M. Turgénev's statement. The latter goes on to say in his *Memoirs*:

"With me he conversed with especial readiness, for I had not long since returned from Berlin, where I studied



the philosophy of Hegel, and was thus in a position to give him the results of the newest investigations. We then still believed in the reality and truth of philosophical and metaphysical deductions, though neither he nor I was a philosopher, or able to reason in the clear, abstract manner of the Germans.

“He was very thin and ill (he was at the time of which I write nearly carried to his grave by inflammation of the lungs), but when I went to see him, he would immediately rise from his sofa, and in a scarcely audible voice, coughing perpetually, his pulse at a hundred, and his cheeks patched with pink, resume the conversation where it was broken off the night before. . . .

“As regards myself,” says Turgénev in his *Memoirs*, “I am bound to say that Byéliniski, after his first compliments upon my literary performances, very soon—and very justly—cooled down with respect to them. He could not, indeed, encourage me in the composition of the verses and poems to which I was then devoting myself. For that matter, I soon found out myself that there was no necessity for me to continue those performances, and I made a firm resolution to give up literature. But in response to the wish of T. T. Panáev, who wanted some copy to make up the first number of the *Sovreménnik*, I sent him, on leaving St. Petersburg at the end of 1846, a sketch called *Khor' i Kalinuich*. (The words ‘from *A Sportsman's Note-book*’ were added by M. Panáev, out of his own head, in order to favourably impress the reader.) The success of that

sketch induced me to write others, and I returned to literature."

To what purpose M. Turgénev returned to it we know. He had found his true vocation. It cannot be regretted that he definitely abandoned poetry for prose; we can only complain of the unfair treatment by the author of what poetry he did produce before his conversion.

On leaving Russia in 1846 Iván Sergyéevich went to Germany and to France, and stayed out of his country for some time. He was with Byélinski for a short period at Salzburg and Paris, not long before the death of the critic in 1848. At Paris were written most of the stories of which the *Sportsman's Note-book* is composed. There is a melancholy tinge in many of the sketches, which indicates more or less clearly the state of mind of M. Turgénev while they were being written. He had at that time determined not to return to Russia, feeling an apparently unconquerable dissatisfaction with the social and political condition of that country. This determination, while it lasted, must have cost Iván Sergyéevich a good deal; for if he could not be satisfied with Russia, it must have been because he loved her too much to be so.

However, M. Turgénev did return to his country—to his cost. In 1852 Nikolái Gógol died, and for an article which Iván Sergyéevich wrote upon the great humorist, which was published in the *Moscow News* (March 1852), he was imprisoned for one month, and then ordered to live in the country. He remained for two years on his

mother's estate in the government of Orël. M. Turgénev had known Gógol, and admired him as much as he valued his friendship. He was much pained by the death of his friend, and wrote an eulogistic obituary article upon him. This article was not passed by the St. Petersburg Censorship, but that of Moscow approved it, and the article was printed, as stated. His offence was "disobedience to and infraction of the Censorial laws." It was represented to the Government by the curator of the St. Petersburg district, M. Músin-Púshkin, that he had summoned M. Turgénev to come to him, and delivered to him personally the prohibition of the Censorial committee to print the article on Gógol, so that M. Turgénev should not try to print it elsewhere. In point of fact no such thing took place. The author never set eyes upon M. Músin-Púshkin. M. Turgénev was liberated on the accession of Alexander II., when a wiser order of things was inaugurated. The whole incident is typical of the Russian officialism of Nicholas' days. The censured article may now be read in the complete edition of Gógol's works.

To anyone unacquainted with Russian ways and ideas, it would seem well-nigh impossible that such a composition could have been pronounced seditious. M. Turgénev took his punishment with that good-natured philosophy which belongs to Russians in general and to him in particular. "It was all for the best," he says; "my imprisonment and banishment to the country were undoubtedly profitable to me: they made me acquainted with those features of

Russian life which, in the ordinary course of things, might have escaped my attention."

During his stay in the country, M. Turgénev was enabled, as he says, to study his countrymen and provincial life in Russia with that thoroughness which has made his works masterpieces of analysis and observation. The remaining facts of M. Turgénev's life may be related in a few words. On being set at liberty in 1854, he recommenced going backwards and forwards between Russia and foreign countries, a practice which he continued nearly up to the time of his last illness, though for a great many years he spent most of his time out of Russia. In 1856 he published three volumes of *nouvelles* and tales,\* written between 1844 and 1856. They included the *Sportsman's Note-book*, *Dmíttri Rúdin*, *On the Eve*, *Three Portraits*, *A Correspondence*, *First Love*, and many other sketches and stories. The collection was received in the most favourable manner, as well it might be! In 1858 the *Nest of Nobles* was published. In 1860 M. Turgénev was at Ventnor. In 1862 *Fathers and Sons* was given to the world. The next year the author migrated to a delightful house, the "Villa Tourguéneff," at Baden, where he lived, making yearly visits to Russia, until 1870, at which period he established himself in Paris, remaining there until his death, though not without yearly absences. In 1868 *Smoke* was published; in 1872,

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\* *Povyéstui i Razskazúi*, 1856.

*Spring Floods*; in 1874, *Púnin and Babúrin* (in the *Messenger of Europe*); in 1877, *Virgin Soil*, M. Turgénev's last great work. After 1877 he wrote several short sketches, among which may be mentioned *The Song of Triumphant Love*; *Senilia: Poems in Prose*; and *Clara Milich* (his last published composition). These works show not so much a decline, as a misdirection of power. They are the writings of the most consummate of literary artists, who is bent upon working out obscure psychological problems, and is beset by phantastic visions.

M. Turgénev received the honorary degree of D.C.L. at the Encenia of 1879. On the occasion of his last visit to Russia, in 1880, he was greeted with an ovation from his fellow-countrymen, in which, it is believed, the Government did not participate. He died in September 1883, at Bongival, near Paris, after a long and agonising illness, borne, as his doctors testify, with noble patience. He was buried at St. Petersburg in the following month. MM. Renan and About pronounced eulogistic orations upon him when the body was removed to Russia; while the funeral at St. Petersburg was attended by deputations from every part of Russia. It was his wish to rest near his friend Byélinski, but that could not be. He lies, however, in Russian ground, in the midst of his countrymen whom he so loved.

The literary activity of Iván Sergyéevich extended over a period of very nearly forty years. Not so fruitful as George Sand or Sir Walter Scott, he has nevertheless

produced an amount of work which may be described as large, considering that he has never written an inartistic or careless page. He is, on the whole, a very even writer, at all events as regards style and workmanship. In any volume of M. Turgénev's works which you may take down, you are sure to find those distinctive qualities, those excellences which belong to his genius.

The two stories in this volume, not the *chefs d'œuvre* of their author, reflect, even when seen through the imperfect medium of a translation, all the best qualities of the novelist. It is a matter for sincere regret to me that my readers cannot enjoy the stories in the original; for, regardless of the hackneyed saying that *qui s'excuse s'accuse*, I cannot help remarking that the style of M. Turgénev presents great difficulties to the translator; and that consequently the renderings which follow give but an imperfect idea of the beauty of the original Russian. Prosper Mérimée, who had considerable experience in translating from the Russian, and was a master of his own language, well says: \* “Le russe est une langue faite pour la poésie, d'une richesse extraordinaire et remarquable surtout par la finesse de ses nuances. Lorsqu'une pareille langue se trouve à la disposition d'un écrivain ingénieux qui se plaît à l'observation et à l'analyse, vous devinez le parti qu'il en peut tirer et

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\* *Pères et Enfants*, par Ivan Tourguenef, précédé d'une lettre à l'Editeur par Prosper Mérimée, de l'Académie Française.

les insurmontables difficultés qu'il prépare à son traducteur." No Russian writer is clearer, or easier to understand, than M. Turgénev; but his clearness is easier to admire than to imitate. The Russian language is so highly synthesised, and is so rich, so full of delicate *nuances*, as Mérimée says, that the difficulties of M. Turgénev's translators are not all prepared for them by the author. The form of the language permits of sentences being composed with elegance which would be intolerably long and involved in English. The minute description and subtle analyses in which M. Turgénev delights are executed in language of wonderfully delicate precision, which can scarcely be rendered into English without appearing clumsy and tautologous. The German translation of his works which was produced under his supervision is, owing to the nature of the German language, the most faithful, and that which gives the reader the best idea of M. Turgénev's style and peculiar charm. The German language is, indeed, peculiarly well adapted to be the medium of translation.

*First Love* and *Púnin and Babúrin*, I said, will be found to be marked by all the chief characteristics of M. Turgénev's style and manner. Do we not find in them that minuteness of description which is never tedious, that subtle analysis of character, that dramatic power which is never theatrical, that pictorial art which puts a picture before us with a few simple touches, firm but delicate, that irony without bitterness, that gentle humour and pathos,

that poetical all-enveloping atmosphere, that still sad music which sounds through all his pages? Perhaps to the reader who sees Turgénev in the English dress which I have given him, this praise may seem exaggerated. Yet I would fain hope that even so, the true nature of the author must show itself. M. Turgénev is a realist in the best sense of that much-abused word. On the stage the realism means, as we know, the use of real champagne at dinner, and much smoking of cigarettes. The realistic novelist seems now to be he who revels in unpleasant details. If his hero suffers from dyspepsia, it is obviously the part of a realist to give us as "full, true, and particular" an account of his symptoms as possible. If a poetical hero is bilious, dyspeptic, or pimply, of course he must be so represented in the novel. The novelist copies life; he must see what is to be seen; and he must tell us what he sees. M. Turgénev also tells us what he sees; and it will be readily granted that he did not go about with his eyes shut. On the contrary, he even used a microscope now and then. But he is a poet, an idealist as well as a realist. There are certain things which he sees but does not relate. The fact of an incident being nasty does not impel him to put it before his readers. He does not shun unpleasant topics when they are artistically necessary—as his readers know; but without sacrificing truth, he deals with them in an irreproachable manner.

Take the scene in the garden when "Monsieur Vol-demar" keeps watch, with his pocket-knife ready for the



rival. It is a dangerous scene. It might easily be made repulsive; yet with inimitable skill, M. Turgénev has treated it so that we see nothing more than saw the spotless boy's heart. We are no more shocked than he is. The curious thing is that this result is achieved not by vagueness, but by a minute and precise description.

Byéliniski said that M. Turgénev was an enemy of all indefiniteness.\* That is perfectly true. He is as accurate as Meissonier, and as soft as Corot. It is in his descriptions of nature, descriptions so richly subjective, that we see this peculiarity at its best. Nowhere are there finer pictures of land and sky than are to be found in M. Turgénev's pages. And of these pictures, the night scenes are especially to be admired. With a few strokes, each of which reveals a keen eye, and a rich store of observation, he brings before us a picture which haunts the mind. That night scene in the garden, to which I have just now alluded, furnishes an example of this power. The physiognomy of the moon, the night atmosphere, the hush, are as plain to us as if we were crouching down with beating hearts beside Monsieur Voldemar. Then again, one evening when the boy leaves the Zasyékins' after a noisy game of forfeits, how artistically is the state of the night brought into contrast with his excited condition! We see, ourselves, the dark moving clouds, we feel on our heated temples the cooling night breeze.

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\* *On vrag vsego neopredyelennago.*

These effects, these descriptions, particularly numerous in the *Sportsman's Note-book*, are produced by the simplest means, as I have already said. There is no laborious cataloguing of colours and forms; neither does M. Turgénev succeed by the use of a tenth-rate art critic's jargon. His vocabulary will seem meagre enough to the ransackers of dictionaries and Thesauri. But it would be a wholesome study for the word-painters of the hour to compare what he accomplishes, with that vocabulary, with the result of their bewildering concatenations of musical and artistic terminology.

Great as M. Turgénev is in his descriptions of nature, he rises to greater heights in his delineations of character, and in his descriptions of men and women. It would be difficult to surpass his gallery of "speaking-likenesses." His characters, like the portraits of Reynolds or Lawrence, are self-evidently resemblant. There is no mistaking Púnin, or the old Princess Zasyékin—to speak only of characters in *Púnin and Babúrin* and *First Love*—for anything but realities. I do not mean, of course, that they are mere servile copies of people whom M. Turgénev has seen; I mean, that they are real, true to life, and that the most casual reader cannot help wondering whether the author has not lived with his characters all his life. It is almost impossible to think that Rúdin, Liza, Bazárov, Shúbin, Paul Kirsánov, for example, strange people as many of them are, are merely the creatures of M. Turgénev's brain. Many of them are taken from life. We

have it for certain that Bazárov was ; and in a letter to the present writer, M. Turgénev, after saying that much that is in the two stories here translated is taken from his own experience, goes on to say that in his works generally he has constantly drawn upon his own experience, whilst endeavouring, as far as possible, to select such characters and incidents as were typical. This accords perfectly with what M. Turgénev has said somewhere in his *Memoirs*. He has been accused, curiously enough, of creating, not human characters, but mere abstractions. It seems to me that national pride must have had something to do with a charge which seeks to divest Rúdin, Bazárov, and others of reality, thereby ridding the Russian character of some reproach. Of all novelists, the author of *Dmitri Rúdin*, and *Fathers and Sons*, ought surely to be the last to have the charge of unreality brought against him. So absurd is the accusation, that it is difficult to know where to begin with its refutation, so as to convince a man who lacks perception so much as to make it. On this question, M. Turgénev makes, in his *Memoirs*, the following remarks :—

“ I was taking the baths at Ventnor, a small town on the Isle of Wight—it was in August 1860—when there first came into my head the idea of *Fathers and Sons*—that story, thanks to which the good feelings of the young generation of Russians towards me have, apparently for ever, been impaired. Not once, but many times, have I heard it said and read in criticisms on my writings that

I 'start out from an idea,' or 'follow an idea.' For this some praised, others blamed me. For my own part I must say that I have never attempted to 'create an image' (*sozdavat' obras*), without having for my point of departure not an idea, but a living being, around which I gathered and assembled by degrees all the befitting elements. So it was with *Fathers and Sons*. As the groundwork of its chief character, Bazárov, I took a young country doctor (who died not long before 1860), whose personality had struck me."

M. Turgénev thus most emphatically denies that which is obviously a ridiculous charge. In the above extract from his *Memoirs*, he alludes to the storm which was provoked by *Fathers and Sons*. To inquire into the reasons of the dissatisfaction produced by that work, and M. Turgénev's present position in Russia, will naturally lead me to give in the most convenient way a general idea of his literary work, of *son œuvre*, as the French would say.

Roughly speaking, the stories in the *Sportsman's Notebook* were the first writings which gave M. Turgénev a decided position as a man of letters. Their tone and their effect were decided. However much those masterpieces, *On the Eve*, *Rúdin*, *A Nest of Nobles*, and many other shorter stories, may have added to his artistic fame, they did not alter the popular opinion of his character, aims, and moral position as a writer. They did not alter his *Tendenz*. All the Liberals, all young Russia, adored Turgénev. All the good in Russia and Russia's

sons, as revealed in his faithful pages, was a safeguard for the "new order of things"; the weaknesses, the ineffectuality of the Rúdins of the Shchigrovski Hamlets—these belonged to the past, to the old order of things. The noble women whom M. Turgénev has drawn were to be emancipated; as was Egor, the faithful *muzhík*. The ineffectual hamlets, the French-polished *barins*, adopting a new scientific agricultural theory every month, perfect in the latest Paris idioms, their heads full of fine ideas, and dying of *ennui*, the harsh task-masters grinding down their "souls,"—all these were to be swept away. These the novelists had depicted as remnants of the past, which were to make way for worthier men. It was well known that M. Turgénev's pictures of the hardships, and the philosophy and patience of the serfs, had produced a universally powerful impression. He was looked upon as an advocate, and as therefore bound not to speak against his brief. M. Turgénev was never an advocate, save in the loosest sense of the word. He aimed at depicting Russian life as it was. In his early days, it was such that nothing could furnish a stronger argument for the Liberal cause than a faithful representation thereof. His literary genius made him transcribe his observations, so as to produce an enormous effect. A judge, who sums up the evidence in a case, where one side is very strong, must inevitably strengthen that side still more by an impartial review of the facts. But he is no advocate. Nor was M. Turgénev. He has never distorted, consciously or

unconsciously, a single fact to suit a theory. He has neither flattered nor calumniated. Many of the Liberals, may be, thought, as men unused to political action are apt to think, that a stroke of the Tsar's pen would clear away the chaff, and leave but the wheat. They did not see that the Russia which was exhibited in M. Turgénev's pages was the Russia of the future as well as of the past. That is to say that the causes which produced the Rúdin's and the *bárins* of the *Sportsman's Note-book*, were causes whose energy could only be very gradually destroyed. I am not speaking here of M. Turgénev's literary critics, who never failed to recognise in him the great artist. The Russian *jeunesse*, whose devotion to the author of a *Nest of Nobles* was cooled by the publication of *Fathers and Sons*, can scarcely be supposed to have comprised the serious literary opinion of Russia. As I have said before, not only the sons were incensed at seeing themselves represented by Bazárov, but the fathers were displeased at the way in which they were treated. But what is Bazárov? He is the unforeseen outcome of the old order of things; he is not at all what young Russia dreamt of.

In his *Memoirs*, M. Turgénev explains that Bazárov was taken from life. I will now continue the extract:—

“That remarkable man [the young doctor\*] was, in my eyes, the incarnation of the as yet scarcely formed, still fermenting principle, which has since received the name

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\* *Vide supra*, p. 29

of Nihilism.\* The impressions which he produced upon me was very strong, and, at the same time, not well-defined. At first I could not well account for it; I strained my ears and eyes, as if wishing to glean from my surroundings some confirmation of my own feelings. I was puzzled by the fact that nowhere in our literature could I find any allusion to that which I seemed to see on all sides. Involuntarily I began to ask myself whether I were not pursuing a phantom." That it was no phantom which lured the author on, every reader of *Fathers and Sons* will know. He seized the new type, and gave it a name, before his countrymen had had time to follow him.

Evgéni Vassilyevich Bazárov is not prepossessing, it is true; but I am not sure that the "fathers" (if anyone)

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\* I have no wish to add one line to the controversy as to who first used the word "Nihilism." M. Turgénev undoubtedly was the first to apply it to the Russian movement; but he did not coin it, of course. I do not remember to have seen it stated anywhere that Jean Paul used the word. I came across it in a much-neglected book of his, full of the wisest, tenderest, and most humorous things—the *Vorschule der Aesthetik* (first published at Hamburg, in 1804). § 2 of the I. Programme is headed *Poetische Nihilisten*. This extract, from the beginning of § 2 will show in what sense the word is used: "Es folgt aus der gesetzlosen Willkür des jetzigen Zeitgeistes—der lieber ichsüchtig die Welt und das All vernichtet um sich nur freien Spielraum im Nichts auszuleeren, und welcher den Verband seiner Wunden als eine Fessel abreißt—dass er von der Nachahmung und dem Studium der Natur verächtlich sprechen musz. Denn wenn allmählich die Zeitgeschichte einem Geschichtschreiber gleich wird und ohne Religion und Vaterland ist, so musz die Willkür der Ichsucht sich zuletzt auch an die harten, scharfen Gebote der Wirklichkeit stossen und daher lieber in die Oede der Phantasterei verfliegen, wo sie keine Gesetze zu befolgen findet als eigne, engere, kleinere, die das Reim—und Assonanzenbaues. Wo einer Zeit Gott, wie die Sonne, untergeht, da tritt bald darauf auch die Welt in das Dunkel: der Verächter des all achtet nichts weiter als sich und furchtet sich in der Nacht vor nichts weiter als vor seinen Geschöpfen."

had a better right to complain of their portraiture than the sons. Moreover, M. Turgénev himself did not, I imagine, conceive that the new generation appeared at a disadvantage in his novel. From what I have been able to gather, I should say that his sympathies, as an outsider, would be with Bazárov, rather than with the two Kirsánovs. These two last are made to appear somewhat ludicrous when they, or rather Pável Petróvich, the elder of the brothers, attempt to reply to Bazárov's contemptuous criticism of things as they are. With consummate art are they made so to appear. M. Turgénev is too good an artist, too well bred, to tell us that they are a bit affected and conventional—the "fathers." We see it directly they open their mouths before the young Nihilist doctor. The plan of *Fathers and Sons*, as I need look at it here, is simple enough. The brothers Kirsánov, who live together in the country, are men not old, but of the old school—at all events when contrasted with Bazárov. Pável Petróvich is uncompromisingly a "gentleman," in the Russian sense; he dresses à l'Anglaise, and has reserved manners to match his clothes; he is rigidly decorous, and has had a past at Baden-Baden, and elsewhere. He reads *Galignani*. It is in connection with Pável Petróvich that we have a description of Princess R——, that description which Mr. Henry James, Jun., with the eye of a true artist, singles out for commendation.\* Nikolái

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\* See Mr. James' essay on M. Turgénev in vol. cxviii. of the *North American Review*. It is reprinted in the same writer's *French Poets and Novelists*.



Petróvich, the younger brother, the father of Arkádi, whose college friend is Bazárov, is an amiable, easy-going man, expansive, and with no grounded objection to new ideas. He rather mismanages his agriculture, and, a widower, he has promoted one of his better-class peasant girls. Arkádi, on returning home to the country, finds a young brother. "Le Tsar m'a fait l'honneur . . . !" When Arkádi Nikoláevich goes home, on the completion of his University course, he takes with him his "chum," Bazárov, who is on his way to his own home, where an old father and mother live. Arkádi is rather proud of being a Nihilist, but he is not very serious. He is a superficial Nihilist ; but Bazárov, the young doctor, is in grim earnest. After some time, the two young men go to the neighbouring town, whence they are passed on by introductions to Nikolskoe, the country house of Madame Odintsóva, a young widow, who lives with her aunt, and her younger sister, Kátya. After a short stay, the two young men go to the modest house of Bazárov's father, which is some thirty versts from Nikolskoe. Thence they return to the Kirsánovs. But Arkádi Nikoláevich cannot resist going back to Madame Odintsóva's, leaving Bazárov with his father and uncle. Whilst so left, the young doctor is challenged by Pável Petróvich, partly on account of the mother of his brother's child, partly because he hates Bazárov. After this affair the latter leaves, and passing by Nikolskoe, where he finds Arkádi about to be engaged to Kátya, and takes leave of his friend and of

Madame Odintsóva, he returns home, where he dies in a few months of blood poisoning, caught from a patient. Such are the simple facts of *Fathers and Sons*. But with what skill are they not developed! The central figure of the book is Bazárov; it is his career that we follow in reading it. It is very hard, looking at him with our eyes of to-day, to see anything in Bazárov which is calculated to excite violent opposition, unless it be that his manners lack polish. It is only when we realise what were the aspirations of the days before the Emancipation that we can imagine why Bazárov was considered a libel instead of an artistically exaggerated type. Most readers of the present day must like the Nihilist better than the other characters in the book. He is firm, he has courage, and a far better heart and more tenderness than he cares to allow. When he first goes to the Kirsánovs' house he is for ever arguing with the aristocratic Pável Petróvich, whose icy politeness and conventional ideas are very irritating to the rough young doctor. The good-natured brother of Pável is distressed by these altercations, which are never of Bazárov's seeking. Pável cannot resist attacking the Nihilist, and is ostentatiously old-fashioned and "gentlemanly," even in his pronunciation. Arkádi puts himself on the side of Bazárov; but his skin-deep Nihilism does not save him from constant irritation at the manner in which his friend alludes to his uncle when the young men are alone together. However, a truce is soon tacitly agreed upon between Pável Petróvich and Bazárov. The latter, indeed, does not put

himself much *en évidence* at the house, being constantly engaged with his microscope. The young men reach Nikolskoe through the introduction of a friend of an "emancipated" Russian woman, Evdóksiya Kúkshina, of an amusing but unpleasant type. She is shown to us by M. Turgénev in some most vivid and amusing scenes. She lives in an atmosphere of cigarette smoke, champagne, and scientific jargon. At an official ball at the house of the governor of the province, Arkádi and Bazárov meet Anna Sergyéevna Odintsóva. Both are struck by her, especially the former. Arkádi praises up his friend to her with such enthusiasm that feminine curiosity is aroused, and both of them are invited to her house. She wants to know the man who has the courage "to believe in nothing at all." They accept, and in a few days arrive at Nikolskoe. This brings us to the most striking part of the book. On their arrival they are introduced to Kátya, the sister of Anna Sergyéevna, a young girl of seventeen.

Very true to nature is the way in which M. Turgénev treats the situation thus created. Bazárov engrosses the attention of Anna Sergyéevna, with whom, at first, not he but Arkádi is in love. The latter has to put up with the society of Kátya, who almost bores him, and is somewhat constrained by his présence. For a long time Arkádi feels very sorry at the neglect of Madame Odintsóva, though he grows to like the society of Kátya, who is, indeed, a charming girl. He is very young, and it is not to be wondered at if his imagination is more stricken by the *femme du monde*, than

by the tender, reserved young girl. But it very soon appears that Anna Sergyéevna's mind, I will not say her heart, is wholly devoted to Bazárov. A strange change comes over the latter. He does not lose his power of making rough, acrimonious repartees, nor does he profess any increased respect for anything or anybody. It is evident, however, that Odintsóva has produced a strong impression upon him. It shows itself chiefly in a depression of mind, a weakness of purpose, a moody distrust of himself. He feels out of his element, and is disturbed by emotions to which he had schooled himself to remain inaccessible, and for which he has always professed contempt. He probably knows all along that Anna Sergyéevna merely interests herself in and plays with him. She, on her side, never, unless perhaps for an instant, deludes herself with the idea that she loves Bazárov. She is a woman who has never loved. Fresh, rosy, pretty, young, and cold, she has never known what it is to give her heart to another. She is fond of her comfort, of her independence. She longs for something indefinite, perhaps, unconsciously, for love; but this longing is never strong enough to disturb her, to rob her of one hour's sleep. After many walks, after many *tête-à-têtes* with Bazárov, the crisis comes. The doctor receives a message from his father, and resolves to go to his home. The two interviews which he has with Odintsóva, after this resolve is taken, are masterly in the extreme. They reveal the power of the writer in all its extent. Had I the necessary space at my disposal I would

present these two scenes to the reader in their entirety. At the first evening interview Bazárov announces his intention of leaving the next day. "How is it you have made up your mind to go? And your promise?" says Anna Sergyéevna. "What promise?" "Have you forgotten? You were going to give me some lessons in chemistry." "But what can I do?" says Bazárov; "my father expects me; I can't dawdle any longer. For that matter you can read Pelouse et Frémy, *Notions Générales de Chimie*, a good and clearly-written book. You will find everything that you require in it." "But you remember you told me that a book could not replace . . . I forget how you expressed it, but you know what I mean . . . don't you remember?" "What can I do!" repeated Bazárov. "Why should you go?" says Odintsóva, lowering her voice. She is leaning back in her arm-chair with folded arms. Her form is enveloped in an ample white dress. She looks paler than usual in the light of the lamp. She glances at Bazárov. "Why should I stop?" asks the latter. Odintsóva turns her head round. "What do you mean? Are you dull here? Or do you think we should not miss you?" "I am convinced of it." The fencing now begins. Bazárov is angry with himself for being moved as he is. He is irritated because he feels that Odintsóva has been able to disturb him without being disturbed herself. She tells him that when he is gone she shall feel great *ennui*. He does not believe it. With some spite he says: "You will not bore yourself, because you

have already told me that you only do so when your daily life is disturbed. You have arranged your life on such a faultless, correct principle, that there is no place in it for weariness, grief, or for any deep feelings." Odintsóva is slightly stung by this speech, but she does not contradict it. She pursues Bazárov by her answers and remarks, as well as by her questions, as if she were anxious to provoke a decisive statement from him. It is coquetry, not wholly conscious, but coquetry all the same. She asks such questions as these: "Then you resolutely refuse to believe that I am incapable of being carried away . . .?" "Perhaps by curiosity, not otherwise," is Bazárov's answer. "Can I not, then, fall in love?" "How do you know that it is a misfortune to fall in love?" Naturally, some of her questions result from observations by Bazárov; but it is she who "pursues" the conversation. They separate, however, without anything definite having been said on either side. She has told Bazárov that she is not disenchanted, but dissatisfied; and that it is not so easy to "give one's self." He replies that it certainly is not easy if you stand reflecting and waiting.

The final meeting takes place the next day. Anna Sergyéevna invites Bazárov into her room, so that he may give her the name of "some manual." *Il va sans dire* that she cares little for any such recommendation. He has not said much about Ganot's *Traité de physique expérimentale*, and the before-mentioned book by Pelouse et Frémy, ere Odintsóva interrupts: "Evgéni Vasílyich,

forgive me, but I did not ask you in here to have your opinion on text-books." That is true enough. She is anxious to resume yesterday's conversation; Bazárov is not. It is, however, resumed, and its character remains the same. Anna Sergyéevna tells the young Nihilist that he is too clever, and has too much *amour propre*, to be a mere district physician; then, in the course of conversation, she says: "I see, you despise us all!" That is denied. "I do not despise you, Anna Sergyéevna, and you know that." "I know nothing—but granted; I understand your disinclination to speak of your future performances! But that which is going on within you now . . ." "Going on within me!" exclaimed Bazárov; "just as if I were some government or community. In any case, it is not of any interest. And, moreover, can a man always say aloud what is 'going on within him'?" "I cannot see why one should not say everything that is in his heart." "Can *you* do that?" asks Bazárov. "I can," replies Anna Sergyéevna, after a slight hesitation. Bazárov lowered his head. "You are more fortunate than I am." Anna Sergyéevna looks enquiringly at him. "As you like," she continued; "but something tells me all the same that we have not met in vain, that we shall be good friends. I am convinced that your—what shall I say?—your stiffness, your reserve, will at length disappear." "So you notice some reserve in me? and what else did you say, stiffness?" "Yes." Bazárov rises, and goes to the window. "And you would like to know the cause of

this reserve—you would like to know what is going on within me?" "Yes," repeats Odintsova, with a certain fear for which she cannot account. "And you will not be angry?" "No." "No?" Bazárov is standing with his back to her. "Well, know that I love you stupidly, madly. . . . That is what you wanted to know!" In a moment he has seized her in his arms, and she has freed herself, and stands in the further corner of the room. In fear she quickly whispers: "You did not understand me." Bazárov bites his lips, and leaves the room. Anna Sergyéevna has but little right to complain; she clearly has brought upon herself the declaration of a man whom she does not love. She feels that she has been wrong—but she "could not foresee" what was to happen, she says to herself. If that be true, she was blind from selfishness. An untutored medical man who believed in nothing at all was amusing to her, and she "drew him out" regardless of the consequences. Once or twice before meeting him again at dinner, she has momentary doubts about her feelings for Bazárov. But peace of mind and body is everything, and she throws him aside. In the garden, after dinner, he begs her pardon. She is not, she says, angry, but grieved. "'So much the worse,' he says. 'In any case I am punished enough. My position, you will most likely agree, is very contemptible. You asked me why I was leaving? But I cannot and will not stay. To-morrow I shall be gone.' 'Evgéni Vasílyich, why——' 'Why do I go?' 'No; I



did not mean that.' 'You cannot recall the past, Anna Sergyéevna,—and it must have happened sooner or later. Consequently I must leave. I only know of one condition upon which I could stay; and that condition will never be. You do not—pardon my audacity—love me, and never will love me?' For a moment, Bazárov's eyes gleamed beneath his dull brows. Anna Sergyéevna made no answer. 'I am afraid of this man,' flashed through her mind. 'Good-bye,' said Bazárov, as if guessing her thought; and went towards the house."

So separate Anna Sergyéevna and Bazárov, practically for ever. They do, indeed, see each other once or twice more; but everything between them is over. When Bazárov reaches his home, accompanied by Arkádi, he receives a tender welcome from his old father and mother, the latter abounding in soft maternal cares and diminutives for her brusque son; the former as passionately fond of Evgéni as his wife, but endeavouring to assume a tone of manly sturdiness. The description of the modest home of this delightful old couple—warm, comfortable, old-fashioned, with a smell of dinner and tea pervading the place; the rendering of the young men's feelings towards the old Bazárov, and especially of the mingled fondness and *ennui* of Evgéni Vasílyich, are beyond all praise. The truthfulness, the humour, the pathos of it all is admirable indeed. Ere long the two students go back to the Kirsánovs, taking Nikolskoe *en route*. But at the latter place they stop but a few hours, finding everything

in a painful contrast with what it was—experiencing the disenchantment of a second visit to a place where they have been very happy. Kátya is not well, and invisible. It is when he goes to Nikolskoe without seeing her, that Arkádi first discovers that she it is whom he went to see. They do not leave without a warm invitation to return before long. Bazárov and Arkádi have not been many days at the Kirsánovs' before the latter, unable to hold out any longer, goes off to Nikolskoe. Bazárov, left alone with Pável and Nikolái Kirsánov, is in no very enviable condition. However, he devotes himself to his science. Nikolái Petróvich constantly—and, occasionally, even Pável—assist at his investigations with the microscope, taking apparently a vast interest therein. Bazárov begins to like the simple, sweet-natured Fénichka, the young mother of Nikolái Petróvich's child. She, on her side, is glad to talk to the young doctor who seems to be more akin to her than the aristocratic Pável. Moreover, he prescribes for her little boy's simple ailments. The two often see each other in the garden by chance in the early morning. One morning they sit down and talk together for some time. It ends in Evgéni Vasílyich asking her for a rose, and kissing her lips, within sight of Pável Petróvich, who, however, does not show that he has seen anything. Fénichka is in distress. She tells Bazárov that he has behaved wickedly. Immediately after this, Pável Petróvich formally challenges Evgéni Vasílyich. The account of the challenge and of the duel itself,

in which the "gentleman" is slightly wounded, is delightful. Kirsánov appears slightly ludicrous; and good sense is on Bazárov's side. Yet he is admirable, too, this polished, courtly *barin*, with his icy composure, his strict adherence to his code of honour. His respect for Bazárov grows visibly when the latter accepts the challenge readily. After duly tending his wounded antagonist, the Nihilist goes home, calling at Nikolskoe on the way. Here he learns that Arkádi is to marry Kátya. He cannot refrain from enjoying somewhat Anna Sergyéevna's embarrassment at the engagement. The day before she knew of it she let Bazárov know that she was "interested" in Arkádi, and that he was by no means so insignificant as he had seemed. He felt for Kátya, she said, as a brother, remarking that her proper *rôle* was that of aunt. She soon reconciles herself, however, to the coming marriage. After Evgéni Vasílyich has left, and she is the witness of the young people's happiness, she reflects: "I suppose Bazárov was right—curiosity, nothing but curiosity, love of quiet, and egotism. . . ."

The two students take an affecting leave of each other. Bazárov tells Arkádi that they are parting for ever. Feeling as deeply as the young "noble," as he styles his friend, Evgéni Vasílyich sees things as they are, and has the courage to look ahead. He knows that their ways have parted; he knows that Arkádi's Nihilism has vanished; he knows that the bonds that bound them together can never be re-united. He is almost playful towards his

former companion, who is going to marry and settle down into a young country gentleman. But perhaps the sportive tone is but assumed to disguise disappointment and regret. Arkádi throws his arms round his friend's neck, and his tears flow fast. The same evening he is happy enough with Kátya. As Bazárov predicted, he had soon forgotten.

Evgéni Vasílyich delights his parents by announcing to them that he will stop at home for six months. They little know that he has come home for ever. "Little Mother," says old Bazárov to his wife, "when Ényushka\* came home for the first time, we worried him a little ; this time we must be wiser." Bazárov's moroseness is not of very long duration. A change soon comes over him. He grows thinner, weaker, melancholy ; rather seeks society ; will smoke with his father, and even ask after the parish priest. But his father becomes anxious about his son's hypochondria, as he deems it. His circuitous methods of enquiry into his son's condition are highly ineffectual. Though more tractable in many ways, Evgéni Vasílyich is very difficult to approach with a "How do you feel?" or a "What is the matter?" Having occasion once to help his father with an operation, he gradually got to helping him regularly. Old Bazárov is immensely proud of his son. He tells one of his patients, the wife of a peasant, that "Napoleon, the Emperor of the French, has not a better doctor" than his son.

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\* Diminutive of Evgéni.

One day, however, Evgéni asks his father for a piece of caustic, for a slight cut which he has in a finger. He cut himself whilst performing the autopsy of a peasant who had died of typhus fever. The wound is cauterised ; but too late, for it is already four days old. In three more days Bazárov takes to his bed, and very soon he dies of fever. All through his illness he cannot keep from irony. He cannot help smiling at the way in which, as he says, his father finds comfort in a word. "The crisis has come; the crisis has passed——" That word "crisis" was a comfort to the old father. Bazárov begs that Anna Sergyéevna may be sent for. As soon as possible she comes, bringing a German doctor with her. Her first feeling on seeing the sick man is one of terror at his altered and ghastly state. It flashes through her mind that she would have felt differently had she loved him. Evgéni thanks her. He asks to be left alone with her, remarking, with a faint smile, that she need not be afraid of a dying man. "This is regal," he says; "they say that Tsars visit dying people." What he says to her as she sits near him is eminently characteristic. He is too weak to be as rough and trenchant as he was ; his tone is one of gentle irony and philosophical resignation. His time has come ; he has no illusions as to his fate ; he knows that Anna Sergyéevna will forget him ; he ridicules the idea of his being of any use to his country. "I useful to Russia ! No, evidently not. Who, indeed, is useful ? The boot-maker is useful ; the tailor is useful ;

the butcher—sells meat—the butcher—— Stop ; I am confused. There is a wood——’ He put his hand to his forehead. Anna Sergyéevna bent over him. ‘Evgéni Vasílyich, I am here.’ He seized her hand all at once, and raised himself. ‘Good-bye,’ he said ; ‘listen, I did not kiss you that time. . . . Blow on the dying flame, that it may go out. . . .’ Anna Sergyéevna pressed her lips to his forehead. ‘That is enough,’ he cried, and sunk into his pillow. ‘And now—the darkness.’” Bazárov died that night.

M. Turgénev has written few things more exquisite than the account of Bazárov’s last stay in his father’s house. It breathes a spirit of tender sympathy with the poor old people, who are almost afraid of showing their love for their only child, who are for ever anxious about him, concerned for his comfort, and in constant fear of worrying him—a sympathy which does not blind him to the little absurdities of which they are guilty. Arína Vlasýévna, the mother, is charmingly drawn by M. Turgénev.

I must quote the closing lines of *Fathers and Sons* :—  
“In one of the remote corners of Russia there is a small village cemetery. Like nearly all our cemeteries, it bears a sad aspect ; the ditch which surrounds it is grown over with grass, the grey wooden crosses are tumbling down and rotting beneath their once painted rooflets, the stone slabs are all out of place, looking as if someone had been pushing them down ; two or three naked trees afford scanty shade, the sheep stray unrestrainedly over the graves. But

there is one grave which man does not touch, nor beast trample; only the birds rest upon it, and sing at the break of day. An iron railing encloses it, and at each end are planted two young firs. Evgéni Bazárov is buried there. From a neighbouring village two infirm old people often come to visit the grave; they are husband and wife. Supporting each other, they walk with an enfeebled gait, they approach the iron railing, and fall down on their knees and weep bitterly and long, and long do they look, with fixed gaze, at the mute stone beneath which lies their son. They exchange a word or two now and then, remove a few stones from the soil, arrange a branch of one of the firs, and return to their prayers, and cannot leave the spot where they seem nearer to their son, and the memories of him seem fresher. Will their prayers, their tears, be unavailing? Is not love—holy, devoted love—all-powerful? Oh, yes! however passionate, sinful, and unsubmissive be the heart that lies in the grave, the flowers blooming above look tranquilly down upon us with their unblemished eyes; they speak to us not only of one eternal peace, the great peace of ‘indifferent’ nature; they tell us also of the eternal reconciliation, and of the life without end.”

It is impossible to close *Fathers and Sons* without a feeling of regret and sadness. Most readers have sympathised with Bazárov, they have seen in him the exaggerating opponent of a bad state of things; one who has turned away from “society” in disgust, and has not yet found his right path. Politically, using the word in its

broadest sense, he dies as fruitless as Rúdin, and he must have done so. He is not a Nihilist of action. It is as long a step from *Fathers and Sons* to *Virgin Soil* on the one hand, as it is from *Fathers and Sons* to *Rúdin* on the other.

There is nothing of the *phraseur* in Bazárov. He is disgusted with society on principle, and he devotes himself to science with genuine earnestness. Dmitri Rúdin is incapable of devoting himself to anything, and his views on the world around him, shrewd as many of them are, lead him to nothing but the repeated exposition thereof. Bazárov believes in and respects nothing except science; Rúdin believes in a great many things—in more, perhaps, than is warrantable. Whatever career a man of science might have made for himself in Russia in Bazárov's days, was open to him, and he might have attained to eminence but for his death. The most superficial observer of human nature cannot help seeing that Rúdin would never do anything.

From one cause or another, scarcely one of M. Turgénev's characters does do anything: Insárov, Bersénev, and Shúbin, in *On the Eve*, Lavrétski in *A Nest of Nobles*, Sánin in *Spring Floods*, Nezhdánov in *Virgin Soil*—what is the sum total of all their lives? What does any of them accomplish? Insárov dies early in his native Bulgaria; Nezhdános shoots himself, after a feeble, bootless struggle; Sánin disappears, no one knows whither, having lost the woman he loved through his own vicious weakness:



Lavrétski, left with a wife who has dishonoured herself, and the girl he would have married in a convent, makes some efforts to do useful work. But of all the striving and suffering, the living and thinking, what is the fruit? The answer can scarcely be anything but—nothing.

If so, there must be a reason. Let us remember that M. Turgénev's novels are all Russian—all that we see in them is Russian, and their moral is particularly applicable to his country. If we look into the cause of so much failure, we almost inevitably conclude that the cause is a fatal weakness of character, weakness, and the indolence, the indecision, the hopelessness which weakness engenders. A master hand has painted for us the picture of his country at different periods, and that is what it shows us. The relation which this debility of character bears to the political condition of Russia it is for the politician to discover. This one question I may be allowed to ask here. What career was open to Rúdin, even to Bazárov? Ineffectual they both were, in different ways. But did their country encourage them to be anything else? Rúdin was of the old generation, Bazárov of the new. But those external causes which, indirectly, contributed to the failure of the former, would have cut short or hampered the development of the latter, had not death been before them.

The hero of M. Turgénev's last great work, *Virgin Soil*, well-known to English readers, the Nihilist Nezhdánov destroys himself at the end of the book, in one of the saddest

and most poignant scenes that I know of in the works of the author. He is not equal to the task which he has undertaken. He is morally as infirm and contemptible as the corrupted class against which he wages war. His attempts to organise a serious Nihilistic propaganda are ludicrously unsuccessful. He becomes a drunkard in order to propitiate the peasantry—and all for nothing. The finest character in the book is Marianna—again a woman—a Múza of the new generation. The practical, manly engineer is admirable, it is true; but he is by no means a typical Nihilist of the newest type. *Virgin Soil* gives, despite the protest of the revolutionary party (who are naturally anxious to discredit it) the best picture of the latest phase of Nihilism in Russia at the date of its publication. In the preface to a collection of poems by Russian political proscripts (*Iz-za Reshëtki—From Behind the Prison Bars—Geneva, 1877*), M. Turgénev is sneered at as a gentleman-artist (“gentleman-*khudózhnik*”); and it is said that he has been so much out of Russia, that he has confused two distinct movements; Nezhdánov belonging to an earlier phase than that reached when *Virgin Soil* came out. It is argued that the characters in the book cannot be true to life, because they are so absurd.

How consoling it would be if such an argument could be relied upon. I wonder if the writer of the preface to the curious little book above-mentioned thinks the absurdity of some of M. Turgénev's Barins sufficient evidence of their untruthfulness. The novelist is often spoken of here as if

he had had some peculiar connection with Nihilism. That he was a sound Liberal is, I take it, certain. He also afforded generous aid to many of his exiled countrymen, irrespective of their creed or opinions. That is rather a proof of kind-heartedness and tolerance than of Nihilism. He has in his writings dealt with Nihilism as he has with every other subject—as a sagacious, accurate observer, and a literary artist of consummate ability. He has painted it as it is. If it does not appear to us more attractive, more respectable, more serious, it is not, assuredly, because it has been unfairly dealt with.

“With them (women) only, occasionally, does he wholly forswear his irony, and become frankly sympathetic. We hope it is not false ethnology to suppose that this is a sign of something, potentially at least, very fine in the character of his country-women. As fine a poet as you will, would hardly have devised a Maria Alexándrovna, an Eléna, a Lisa, a Tatyána, an Irene even, without having known some very admirable women.”

So says Mr. Henry James in his admirable essay on M. Turgénev, to which I have before alluded. It is perfectly true. To the above list might be added Natáliya in *Rúdin*, Múza in *Púnin and Babúrin*. Even Zuiáida in *First Love*, though not admirable, is yet very charming, and by no sort of means can she be set down as a mere vicious woman. There is nothing frivolous in her nature. Her conduct is very far from being blameless; but it is difficult to blame her. The love which masters her is a

deep passion ; it is to no passing whim that she yields. Múza Pávloona is a woman of a very different type. There is in her the steadfastness, the endurance, the fire, which go to make up the heroine. In her we see something like austerity, a pure fervour which commands respect and admiration, if it does not evoke love. Múza is a "new type," as Tarkhov puts it ; but what we notice in her we notice to a lesser degree in Eléna, Liza, Tatyána, and even the apparently ordinary Kátya in *Smoke*. Turgénev's female characters, if not artistically finer, are certainly far more attractive than his men. He has portrayed with abundant delicate love, and displayed their peculiar features to us with all tenderness. They are not prudes, they are not forbidding, they are not *guindées* ; but they have something about them which makes a man very careful in approaching them, which puzzles, perhaps frightens him, if he be young. This attribute of the Russian young girl is made rather more peculiar by the fact that she is not a prisoner like the French girl, but has a freedom of intercourse with men which puts her much nearer to the girls of England and America, who, full of excellent qualities, are not surrounded by that indescribable atmosphere which seems, at first, to turn love into admiration, and to wither up the compliment on the lips of the offender. Mr. Henry James says that the nature of the Russian girl has something of the "faintly acrid perfume of the New England temperament—a hint of Puritan angularity." There is some justice in this remark. But two races so widely different as

the Slavonic and the Anglo-Saxon can resemble each other but very superficially. There is something Asiatic in the calm doggedness, the fatalism, and the fitful fire of the Russian nature. When her moment has come, the calm, austere (if the word be not too strong) Russian girl will be carried on and away by a *fougue* unknown to the Anglo-Saxon. In the meantime, she moves about enveloped in a cooling atmosphere of confident expectancy. But the spring bursts forth as suddenly, as joyously, in the breast of the young Russian girl, as it does over the ice-bound land after a Russian winter. But should no sun shine for the girl, or should it shine and be soon obscured, she will resign herself. The sun will sink again, and for ever. In the *Nest of Nobles*, Liza retires to a convent. She has loved a man who was perhaps worthy of her, who thought he could marry her. He discovers that his wife, who long since left him and dishonoured herself, still lives, and Liza and he must separate. She will have no dimmer jewel than the pure love which was her's for a moment; the sun has shone for a day, and is gone. She bows her head and leaves this world. In *On the Eve*, Eléna's moment comes when she meets Insárov, the Bulgarian patriot. When he dies in his native country, she remains there. Why should she return to Russia? she asks. Life has yielded its fruit.

M. Turgénev has certainly done honour to the women of Russia. One knows not where else to look for such a rose-garden as he has painted. Even the "wicked

fairies" are actuated by deep feelings. It would be peculiar if the most truthful novelist of his time should have flattered his countrywomen, while dealing mercilessly with his own sex. For, though not harsh or uncharitable, he is inexorable in his adherence to truth. Here we have the secret of his greatness. His well-controlled humour, his sensitiveness to every charm and beauty, to every deformity of nature, his responsiveness to all the moods of men and women, his wide sympathies, his great knowledge of the world of to-day and of the past, his keen sportsman's eye—for a great sportsman he was, as every reader of the *Note-book* will know—have enabled him to depict life as it is with a fidelity which is marvellous. But he is a poet and a novelist in one. It is as rare as it is delightful to take up a book where, side by side with the most minute and subtle analysis of character, and detailed realistic descriptions, you find passages of tender prose-poetry. Such a book is each of M. Turgénev's; and if this introduction, which has run, in rather a rambling fashion, to a greater length than I had intended, should do anything towards making the Russian novelist better known to the English public, I shall not offer any apology for having said so much.

The writings of M. Turgénev have not been without effect on the newer school of French novelists; and in Germany the gifted novel and *nouvelle* writer, Paul Heyse, has, I should say, not remained unaffected by the genius of the Russian author. But most noticeable is the strong effect

which the works of M. Turgénev have produced upon what the *Quarterly Review*, with questionable taste, calls the "Howells and James school." Mr. James is most decidedly the disciple of M. Turgénev; that the relationship between them might be expressed in a less agreeable manner, I do not wish to say. There is, for that matter, I conceive, nothing derogatory in being influenced by such a writer as Iván Sergyéevich Turgénev, or even in modelling oneself upon him. One tale of Mr. James' there is which exemplifies what I have been saying in the most striking manner. Except that the scene of it is chiefly in America, it might easily pass for a production of M. Turgénev's. As a rule, the resemblance of the American to the Russian author is so general, as not easily to admit of description. Mr. James' love of detail, delicate style, and passion for analysis, may be cited as constituting a great part of the likeness. In Russia, M. Turgénev *a fait école*. It would take too long to enter fully into this matter. The distinguished novelist, Count Lev Tolstóy shows clear traces of his fellow-countryman's influence, although he has traced out for himself a path of his own.

It has not been my aim to offer in this place an exhaustive criticism of M. Turgénev's literary work. I have endeavoured to point out to readers unacquainted with his writings some of the salient features thereof; to accompany the following tales by a rough indication of the life of their author, and the characteristics of his works. For-

tunately, it will be long before the echoes of the great European chorus of praise which followed him to the grave have died away. I cannot venture to say more of him who has just been universally and rightly recognised as the greatest of contemporary novelists.

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## F I R S T L O V E .

(PÉRVAYA LYUBÓV'.)

THE clock had struck half-past twelve, the guests had separated some time before, and the only persons remaining in the room were the landlord of the inn, Sergéi Nikolàievitch, and Vladímir Petróvitch. The landlord rang the bell, and ordered the remains of the supper to be removed. When this was done, he settled himself in the depths of his arm-chair, and, puffing at a cigar, said :

“Each of us must tell the story of his first love. It’s your turn, Sergéi Nikolàievitch.”

The man thus addressed, a rotund person with fair fat face, gazed first at the host and then up at the ceiling.

“I had no first love,” said he at length ; “I began with the second.”

“How did you do that ? ”

“It was very simple. I was eighteen when I first began to pay attention to a very nice girl ; but I courted her as

if I were quite an experienced hand—just as I have done with others since. Properly speaking, I fell in love, for the first and last time, when I was six, with my nurse; but that is a long time ago. The details of our love-making have vanished from my memory; and if I could remember them, whom could they possibly interest?”

“What shall we do, then?” exclaimed the landlord. “The story of my first love is not very remarkable either. I never fell in love with anyone till I met my deceased wife, Anna Ivánovna, and with us everything went as smoothly as possible. Our fathers arranged our engagement; we soon fell in love with each other, and married without delay. My story is told in two words. I’ll confess, gentlemen, that when I introduced the question of first love, I relied on you, I will not say old, but, at any rate, not young bachelors. Won’t you tell us something, Vladímir Petróvitch?”

“My first love is certainly not one of the most ordinary,” said Vladímir Petróvitch, with a certain hesitation. He was a man of about forty, with dark hair turning grey.

“Oh,” exclaimed the landlord and Sergéi Nikolàievitch together; “that’s all the better. Tell us your story.”

“With pleasure—or rather, no: I will not tell it, for I am no hand at telling a story. I should make it either dry and short, or diffuse and untrue. But, if you will allow me, I will write down what I remember of it, and read it to you.

At first, the friends could not agree to this; but Vladímir

Petróvitch was firm. In a fortnight they met again, and he kept his word. The contents of the manuscript were as follow :—

## I.

I was at that time sixteen years of age. The incidents of my story occurred in the summer of the year 1833. I was living in Moscow, with my parents; they rented a suburban-house, near the Kalúga gate, opposite Nés-kutchnaya.\* I was preparing for the University; but I was dilatory, and worked very little.

My liberty was unrestricted. I did just as I pleased, especially from the time that I left the hands of my last French tutor, who could not accustom himself to the thought that he had dropped into Russia “like a bomb” (*comme une bombe*); and used to loll on his bed, for days at a time, with a soured expression on his face. My father treated me with indifference, though kindly; my mother scarcely took any notice of me: yet she had no other child: she was absorbed by other cares. My father was still a young and very handsome man when he married. His was a *mariage de convenance*. My mother was ten years older than him. She led a dismal life, perpetually having fits of excitement, jealousy, and anger; but not in the presence of my father. His demeanour was stern, cold, and reserved. I never saw a man more studiously calm, with more self-possession or self-control.

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\* A villa presented to the Imperial family by Count Orlov.

I shall never forget the first weeks which I spent in our country house. We left town on the 9th May; the weather was marvellous. I walked about, sometimes in our garden, sometimes in Néskutchnaya, or beyond the barriers. I would take a book with me, such as one of Kaidànov's *Cours*, but I rarely opened it; occupying myself rather in reciting poetry, of which I knew a great deal from memory. The blood in my veins seemed in a state of ferment, and my heart was sad, so sweetly and pleasantly sad! I was for ever awaiting, fearing something: I wondered at, and was ready for everything: my fancy was at play, and it flitted round the same object, as the martins fly round the church steeple in the early morn. I was meditative and despondent, I even wept; but, through my tears, through my sadness, there pierced, aided now by the chanting of poetry, now by a beautiful evening, like grass at spring-tide, the joyful feeling of young, bubbling life.

I had a horse, which I saddled myself, and rode far and wide, whithersoever I chose. I galloped along, and imagined myself a knight on his tourney. How gleefully the wind blew in my ears! or, turning my face up to the heavens, I received their brilliant light and blue into my open soul. I recollect that at this time no woman's image, no vision of a woman's love, had arisen in my mind with any distinctness. But, in all that I thought, in all that I felt, there lay a half-recognised, bashful presentiment of something novel, something unspeakably sweet, womanly. . . .

This presentiment, this expectation, penetrated my whole being; I breathed it; it flowed through my veins with each drop of blood. It was destined soon to be realised.

Our house consisted of our own dwelling-house, which was of wood, and two low wings. In the left wing was a small factory of cheap curtains. I often went there, and watched some ten wretched rough-haired boys, in grimy jackets, with haggard faces, jumping up to the wooden levers which acted on the square blocks of the press, thus, with the weight of their emaciated bodies, stamping varied patterns on the stuffs. The right wing was empty and to let. One day, however, about three weeks after the 9th of May, the shutters were opened, and some female faces appeared at the windows; it appeared that a family had taken up its quarters there. I recollect that that day at dinner-time my mother asked the butler who our new neighbours were. On hearing that they were Princess Zasyékin and her family, she said, a little impressed, "Oh, Princess!" and then added, "She cannot be well off."

"They came in three cabs," observed the butler, respectfully handing a dish. "They have no carriage of their own, and their furniture's very plain."

"Indeed," replied my mother; "however, that's all the better."

My father glanced coldly at her, and she said no more. In truth, Princess Zasyékin could not be a rich woman. The wing that she had hired was so old, and small, and low, that people only moderately well-off would not have

taken it. At the moment, however, I took no notice of all this. The title of Princess impressed me very little. I had not long since read Schiller's *Räuber*.

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## II.

I was in the habit of patrolling our garden in the evening, gun on shoulder, to ward off the crows. For these cautious, preying, and cunning birds, I had long conceived a hatred. On the evening of the day of which I have been speaking, I went into the garden as usual, and, having in vain roamed up and down all the paths (the crows recognised me, and only croaked in the distance), I chanced to approach a low hedge which separated our grounds from the narrow strip of garden which stretched out behind the right wing, and belonged thereto. I was walking with my head bent down, when suddenly I heard voices: I looked up over the edge, and stood still with amazement. An extraordinary spectacle presented itself to my eyes. A few steps off from me, on the grass between some green raspberry bushes, stood a tall slender girl, in a striped pink dress, with a white kerchief over her head. She was surrounded by young men, whom she touched in turn upon the forehead with some of those small grey flowers of which I do not remember the name. All children know them; they form little bags, which burst with a noise if they are hit with anything hard. The young

men put their foreheads forward very willingly—and in the movements of the girl (of whom I had a side view) there was something so charmingly imperious, so caressing, so merry, so good-humoured, that I almost cried out with astonishment and pleasure, and I would have given almost anything in the world for one of those charming fingers to have touched my forehead. My gun fell to the ground, I forgot everything while I devoured with my eyes that slender figure, and throat, those beautiful hands, the slightly-loosened fair hair which showed from under the white kerchief, the half-closed, intelligent eyes, those eyelashes, and the delicate cheeks below them.

“Young man, young man,” said a voice suddenly near me, “does one look at strange ladies in that way?”

I trembled all over, and stared. Near me, behind the hedge, stood a man, with closely-cut black hair, who looked mockingly at me. At the same moment the girl turned towards me. I saw her large grey eyes, set in a face full of movement and life, which suddenly began to quiver, to break into a laugh, the white teeth gleamed, the eye-brows were merrily raised with a merry look. I blushed deeply, picked up my gun, and followed by loud, but not ill-natured laughter, I ran off to my room, where I threw myself on my bed and buried my face in my hands. My heart literally leapt; I was very much ashamed of myself and very happy: I felt an unknown emotion.

When I had recovered myself, I made my toilette and

went down to tea. The image of the young girl was always before me ; my heart beat more quietly, but was somehow pleasantly oppressed.

“ What is the matter with you ! ” asked my father on a sudden. “ Have you shot a crow ? ”

I wanted to tell him everything, but I restrained myself, and merely smiled to myself. As I was going to bed, I cannot myself tell why, I twirled round three times on one foot, pomatumed my hair, lay down and slept like a top the whole night. Towards morning I woke up for a moment ; I raised my head, looked round me with delight, and fell asleep again.

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### III.

“ How can I make their acquaintance ? ” was my first thought on waking up in the morning. Before taking my tea, I went into the garden ; but I did not go very near the edge, and I saw no one. After tea-breakfast I walked up and down a little on the road before the house. From a distance I looked at the windows of the right wing ; for a moment the girl's face appeared at the window. I retreated in alarm. “ But I must get to know them,” I thought to myself, as I walked about restlessly on the sand before Neskùtchnaya. “ But how ? That's the question.” I thought over the smallest details of yesterday evening's meeting ; I for some reason pictured to myself particularly



clearly how she especially laughed at me. But whilst I was exciting myself and making plans, destiny had taken care of me.

During my absence my mother had received from her new neighbour a letter on grey paper, sealed with some dark-brown sealing-wax, such as is only used in post-offices, and for the corks of cheap wines. In her letter, which was written ungrammatically and in a slovenly handwriting, the Princess begged my mother's protection. The latter was, she said, well acquainted with influential persons, in whose hands were her own fate and that of her children, as she was engaged in some important law-suits. "I appeal to you as a lady to a lady, and I am pleased to make use of this opportunity." In conclusion she begged permission to call on my mother. I found my mother in no very pleasant mood. My father was out, and she had no one whom she could consult. Not to answer a lady, and a princess to boot, was out of the question; but how it was to be done my mother could not make up her mind. A French note seemed out of place, and my mother herself was not good at Russian orthography, as she knew, and did not wish to compromise herself. She was delighted at my coming in, and at once sent me to the Princess to explain to her that she was ready to help her Highness, as far as it lay in her power so to do, and that she would be happy to receive her about one o'clock. This unexpectedly speedy fulfilment of my secret desires filled me with pleasure and fright. But

I did not reveal my perturbation, and went into my room to put on my coat and a new neck-tie ; for at home I still wore a jacket and turned-down collars, though I did not like them.

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#### IV.

In the narrow, untidy hall of the Zasyékins', which I entered trembling involuntarily through my whole body, I was met by an old grey-haired servant with a dark, copper-coloured face, sulky-looking little pig's eyes, and such deep wrinkles on the forehead and temples as I had never seen before. He was carrying a plate on which was the skeleton of a herring, and, as he pushed open with his foot a door leading to another room, he said shortly :

“ What do you want ? ”

“ Is Princess Zasyékin at home ? ” I enquired.

“ Vonifáti ! ” cried, from within the room, a loud woman's voice.

The servant said nothing, but, turning his back to me, thus displaying a very shabby livery coat, with a solitary tarnished button with a coat of arms on it at the waist, he left the hall, having deposited the plate on the floor.

“ Did you go to the police-station ? ” said the same female voice.

The servant muttered something.

“What!—Somebody there?—A young gentleman from next door!—Show him in then.”

“Will you please to walk into the drawing-room, Sir,” said the servant, as he reappeared and picked the plate up from the ground.

I arranged myself and went in. The room was small and not over-clean; and was poorly and apparently hastily furnished. At the window, in a broken arm-chair, sat a woman of about fifty years of age; she was plain, and wore an old green dress, and a coloured worsted tie round her neck, and nothing on her head. Her small black eyes seemed to pierce me through.

I walked up to her and bowed.

“Have I the honour to speak to the Princess Zasyékin?”

“I am the Princess Zasyékin; and you the son of Mr. V.?”

“Yes. I have brought a message from my mother.”

“Sit down, please. Vonifâti! where are my keys? Haven’t you seen them?”

I gave the Princess my mother’s reply to her letter. She drummed her fingers on the window frame as she listened to me. When I had finished, she once more looked hard at me.

“Very well. I shall certainly call,” she said at length. “But how young you are still! May I ask how old you are?”

“Sixteen,” I replied with slight hesitation.

The Princess took from her pocket some greasy papers covered with writing, and held them up to her very nose, and began to sort them.

"A good age," she said suddenly, turning round on her chair. "Don't be ceremonious, I pray. We are very simple here."

"Rather too much so," thought I to myself, as I surveyed, with involuntary repulsion, her ill-favoured person.

At this moment a door quickly opened, and there appeared at it the young lady whom I had seen the evening before in the garden. As she raised her hand a smile came over her face.

"That is my daughter," said the Princess, pointing towards her with her elbow. "Zínochka, this is the son of our neighbour, Mr. V. What is your name, please?"

"Vladímir," I answered, rising, and trembling with excitement.

"And your father's?"

"Peter."

"Yes. I once knew a captain of the police, who was called Vladímir Petróvitch. Vonifáti, never mind the keys! I have them in my pocket."

The young girl continued looking at me with the same smile, with half screwed-up eyes and her head thrown a little on one side.

"I have already seen Monsieur Voldemar," \* she

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\* The French for "Vladímir."

said. (The silvery tones of her voice sent a thrill of pleasure through me.) "You give me leave to call you so?"

"I am sure——" I stammered.

"Where have you seen him?" asked the Princess.

The daughter did not answer.

"Are you busy?" the latter said to me, without taking her eyes off me.

"Not in the least."

"Would you like to help me to unravel some wool? Come along with me."

She signed to me with her head, and left the room. I followed her. The room which we entered was rather better furnished than the drawing-room, and was arranged with more taste. However, at that moment I was almost incapable of observing anything. I moved about as if in my sleep, and experienced in my whole frame a stupidly intense feeling of happiness. The Princess\* sat down, and bade me take a chair opposite to her. She carefully undid a bundle of wool that she had fetched, and placed it on my hands. This she did in silence, with almost malicious slowness, and the same bright, sly smile played round her scarcely parted lips. She began to wind the wool on to a rolled-up card, and suddenly darted such a quick, luminous glance at me, that I involuntarily looked down. When her eyes, which were generally half-closed, opened to their full

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\* *Kniazhná* is the daughter of a prince, *Kniazínia* the wife of one.

extent, her face changed completely ; just as if a light had been cast upon it.

"What did you think of me yesterday, Monsieur Voldémar ?" with a slight pause. "You thought badly of me, I am sure."

"I—Princess—I didn't think anything—as I can—" I replied, bewildered.

"Listen to me," she replied. "You don't know me yet. I am very peculiar ; I want you always to tell me the truth. You are, I hear, sixteen ; I am twenty-one. You see I am much older than you ; and therefore you must always speak the truth to me—and mind what I say," she added. "Look at me—why don't you look at me ?"

I became still more confused, but I looked at her. She smiled, not as before, but this time with a good-natured smile. "Look at me," she said, lowering her voice in a caressing way : "I do not mind it. I like your face. I feel that we shall become friends. And do you like me ?" she added maliciously.

"Princess—" I began.

"First of all, call me Zinaïda Alexándrovna ; and, secondly, what is the meaning of children—" (she corrected herself) "of young people—not saying straight out what they feel ? That's all very well for grown-up people. You like me, don't you ?"

Although I was very pleased that she spoke so openly to me, I was rather offended. I wanted to show her that she

had to do with no mere boy ; so, assuming an air of the utmost confidence and gravity, I said :

“ Certainly, Zinaïda Alexándrovna, I like you very much ; I have no wish to conceal that fact.”

She shook her head slowly. “ Have you got a tutor ? ” she suddenly asked.

“ No, I have not had one for a long time.” It was a lie ; it was not a month ago since my French tutor had left me.

“ Oh, I see, you are quite grown up ! ” She tapped me slightly on the fingers. “ Hold your hands up straight ! ” she said, as she proceeded once more diligently with the winding up of the wool.

I took advantage of her not raising her eyes to look at her, at first stealthily, then more and more boldly. Her face appeared to me even more charming than it had the day before ; it was so refined, clear, and kind. She was sitting with her back to the window, which was hung with white curtains ; the sunbeams striking through the curtains fell with a soft light on her thick golden hair, her pure neck, her lowered shoulder, and her delicate, tranquil bosom. I looked at her ; and how dear, how near did she seem to me ! It was as if I had known her for a long time, and had known nothing, had not lived till then. She had on a thin shabby dress, and an apron ; I could have liked to fondle and stroke each fold of that dress and apron. The tips of her boots peeped out from under her dress ; I could have bowed before them with reverence. And there was I,

sitting before her, I thought to myself—I knew her. What joy! Good heavens! I nearly leapt from my chair in my ecstasy; but I only swung my legs a little, like a child that is enjoying something.

I was as happy as a fish in the water, and I could have remained for an age in that room, on the same spot. She gently raised her eyes, and once more their bright light shone kindly on me, and again she smiled.

“How you look at me,” she said slowly, shaking her head at me.

I blushed. “She understands and sees everything,” flashed across my mind. And how, indeed, should she not have understood and seen everything!

Suddenly I heard a knock at the door of the next room, and the clank of a sword.

“Zina!” cried the Princess from the drawing-room. “Bêlovzórov has brought you a kitten.”

“A kitten!” exclaimed Zinaïda, jumping up violently; and throwing the ball of wool on to my lap, she rushed out of the room. I got up, and, having deposited the wool on the window-ledge, I went into the drawing-room, and stood still in amazement. In the centre of the floor lay a tabby kitten, stretching out its paws; Zinaïda was kneeling before it, and gently lifting up its little mouth. Beside the Princess I noticed a hussar, a fine young fellow with a head of fair curly hair, a red forehead, and prominent eyes. He seemed to take up the whole of the room between the windows.



“What a funny little creature!” exclaimed Zinaïda; “its eyes aren’t grey, but green—and what big ears it’s got. Thank you, Victor Eegóritch, it’s very kind of you!”

The hussar, in whom I recognised one of the young men that I had seen the night before, smiled and bowed, making his spurs and sword rattle as he did so.

“You were pleased to say yesterday that you would like to have a tabby kitten with large ears—so I brought you one. Your wishes are law.” He bowed once more.

The kitten began to mew, and sniffed about the floor.

“It’s hungry,” cried Zinaïda. “Vonifáti! Sónia! bring some milk!”

The maid-servant, in an old yellow dress, with a faded kerchief round her neck, brought in a little dish of milk and put it down before the kitten. It trembled a little, shut its eyes, and began to drink.

“What a pink little tongue it’s got!” said Zinaïda, bending down so as almost to touch the ground, and looking right under the kitten’s nose. When it had satisfied itself, it began to purr, and to clean itself, coquettishly, with its paws. Zinaïda got up, and, turning to the maid, said indifferently, “Take it away!”

“Your hand for the kitten,” said the hussar, grinning, and drawing up his mighty frame, which was tightly encased in a new uniform.

“Both of them,” said Zinaïda, holding out her two hands to him. As he kissed them, she looked at me over her shoulder. I stood motionless, not knowing whether to

laugh, or to say something, or to remain silent. All at once through the opened door of the ante-room, I caught sight of the figure of our servant Feodor. He made a sign to me, which I mechanically obeyed.

"What is it?" I asked.

"Your Mamma has sent for you," he whispered. "She is vexed because you have not come back with the answer."

"But have I been here long?"

"More than an hour."

"More than an hour!" I repeated involuntarily. I went back to the drawing-room, and began bowing and scraping.

"Where are you off to?" said Zinaïda, looking at me from behind the hussar.

"I must go home. So I may say, then," I added, turning to the mother, "that you will come to us between one and two?"

"Exactly."

The Princess pulled out her snuff-box hastily, and took a pinch of snuff with such violence that I literally started.

"Yes, that's the message," she said, moaning and blinking her watery eyes.

I bowed once more, and left the room with that feeling of awkwardness which a very young man experiences when he is conscious that he is being looked after.

"Look here, M'sieur Voldémar, you must come to see us," Zinaïda called out, laughing.

“What is she always laughing at?” I wondered as I walked home with Feodor, who said nothing, but followed me surlily. My mother scolded me, and was astonished that I should “stop so long at that Princess’.” I made no reply, and went to my room. I all at once felt very miserable; it was with difficulty that I kept from crying. I was jealous of the hussar.

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## V.

The Princess fulfilled her promise and visited my mother, who did not like her. I was not present at the meeting, but at dinner my mother told my father that that Princess Zasyékin seemed to her to be “une femme très vulgaire,” that she was very tiresome with her entreaties to intercede for her with Prince Sergéi, that she appeared to be immersed in business and law-suits—“de vilaines affaires d’argent”—and that she must be a great schemer. However, my mother added that she had invited her and her daughter to dinner for the next day—at the words “and her daughter,” I bent down over my plate—“for she is our neighbour, at any rate, and bears a good name.” Whereupon my father told my mother that he now remembered who the lady was: that when he was a young man he had known the Prince Zasyékin, a well-bred but inane, stupid man, who was called in society “le Parisien,” on account of his long residence in Paris; that he was very rich, but gambled

away all his substance, and—for some unknown reason, perhaps for money (at all events he could have done better, said my father with a cold smile)—married the daughter of some civil servant, and after that plunged into speculations, and finally ruined himself.

“Provided that she does not want to borrow money,” remarked my mother.

“That is quite possible,” said my father, quietly. “Does she speak French?”

“Very badly.”

“Hm. However, that doesn’t matter. By the way, you appear to have asked the daughter. Somebody or other told me that she was a very nice, cultivated girl.”

“Oh. . . I suppose she does not take after her mother.”

“Nor after the Prince,” answered my father. “He was well educated, but a fool.”

My mother sighed and became thoughtful. My father was silent. I felt very uncomfortable during the whole of this conversation.

After dinner I went into the garden, but without my gun. I had half resolved not to go near the Zasyékins’ garden, but an irresistible impulse attracted me thither, and not in vain. I had no sooner approached the hedge than I saw Zinaïda. This time she was alone. She held a book in her hands, and was walking slowly along. She did not notice me. I had almost let her go by, but recollected myself in time, and coughed. She turned round but did not stop, arranged the broad blue ribbons of her round straw hat,

looked at me, smiled gently, and looked down at her book. I took off my cap, and after a slight, irresolute movement, I walked away with a heavy heart. "Que suis-je pour elle?" I said to myself (heaven knows why) in French.

I heard a well-known step behind me. I looked round: my father walked up to me with his light, quick step.

"Is that the young Princess?"

"Yes."

"Do you know her?"

"I saw her this morning at Princess Zasyékin's."

My father stopped, and, turning sharply round on his heels, walked back. As he came up with Zinaïda, he politely bowed to her. She bowed too, without any expression of astonishment on her face, and put down her book. I noticed how she followed him with her eyes. My father was always very elegantly dressed, yet simply and originally; but never had I seen him look handsomer, nor his grey hat sit so gracefully on his scarcely-thinned locks. I was on the point of going up to Zinaïda, but she did not look at me, and resumed her reading, and went away.

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## VI.

The whole of that evening and the next morning I was in a miserable condition of torpor. I remember that I tried to work, and took up Kaydánov, but in vain did I gaze at the long lines and the pages of that celebrated

book. Ten times running did I read the words: "Julius Cæsar was remarkable for his audacity in warfare." I understood nothing, and threw the book down. Before dinner I again pomatumed my hair, and put on a coat and stock.

"What is that for?" asked my mother. "You are not a student yet, and goodness knows if you will pass your examination. And how long is it since you had a jacket made! You can't throw it away."

"People are coming to dinner to-night," I muttered, almost in despair.

"What nonsense! What sort of people, indeed!"

I was obliged to give in. I changed my coat for a jacket, but I did not take off my stock.

The Princess and her daughter arrived, half an hour before dinner. The former had on the green dress which I had already seen, and in addition a yellow shawl, and an old-fashioned cap with gaudy ribbons. She at once began to talk about her bills, sighed and complained of her poverty, was full of entreaties, but by no means ill at her ease. She took snuff in a demonstrative way, and turned about on her chair with great unconcern. It never entered her head, evidently, that she was a princess.

On the other hand, Zinaïda's demeanour was very rigid, almost haughty, and thoroughly princely. Her face wore a cold, imperturbable, grave expression; and I did not know her again, did not recognise her look, her smile, although in this new character I thought her very beautiful. She

wore a light barège dress with a pale blue pattern on it, her hair fell in long curls down her cheeks, in the English fashion. This *coiffure* suited the cold expression of her face. My father sat next her at dinner, and looked after her with his peculiar, quiet courtliness. He did not often look at her, and she looked but rarely at him, and then very strangely, with an expression almost of dislike. They conversed in French, and I remember that I marvelled at the purity of Zinaïda's accent. The Princess behaved at table with the same free-and-easiness as she had displayed before, ate a great deal, and praised the dishes. She evidently bored my mother, who answered her in a tone of melancholy contempt. From time to time a slight frown passed over my father's face.

Neither did Zinaïda please my mother. "She's a mass of pride," said the latter on the following day. "And what has she to be proud of, I wonder, *avec sa mine de grisette*!"

"Apparently you have never seen any grisettes," my father remarked.

"Thank heaven for it!"

"Thank heaven, of course; but, in that case how, can you judge of them?"

Zinaïda paid absolutely no attention to me. Soon after dinner the Princess got up to go.

"I shall hope for your protection, Mária Nikoláevna, Piotr Vassílyitch," she kept on saying. "What can I do? Times were different once, but they are gone. Here am

I, a Highness," she said with an unpleasant laugh ; " but what's a title worth when you 've nothing to eat ? "

My father bowed ceremoniously to her, and led her to the door. I stood there, in my short jacket, looking on the ground, like a criminal sentenced to death. I was thoroughly hurt by Zinaïda's behaviour to me. What was my astonishment when, as she passed out, she hurriedly whispered to me, with her former kind expression, " Come this evening, at eight o'clock. Do you hear,—don't fail."

I almost clapped my hands with delight, but she was already at a distance ; and I saw her drawing a white shawl over her head.

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## VII.

At eight o'clock punctually I entered the hall of the Princess, with my long coat on, and my hair brushed into a " Brutus." The old servant eyed me sulkily, and got up from his seat with reluctance.

From the drawing-room came the sound of merry voices. On opening the door, I drew back in astonishment. In the centre of the room, on a chair, stood Zinaïda, holding before her a man's hat. Round the chair were pressing five men. They tried to put their hands into the hat, but she held it up and shook it vigorously.

When she saw me, she called out, " Stop, stop ! here



is a new guest. You must give him a ticket." She jumped lightly off the chair, and took me by my sleeve.

"Come," she said; "what are you standing still for? Messieurs, let me introduce to you M'sieur Voldémar, the son of our neighbour." Turning to me she said, as she pointed at each of the men, "This is Count Malévski, Doctor Lúshin, the poet Maydánov, the retired Captain Nirmátski, and Bêlovzórov, a hussar, whom you have already seen. Be good friends with one another."

I was so embarrassed that I did not even bow to anyone. In Doctor Lúshin I recognised the dark man who had so mercilessly confused me in the garden; the others were unknown to me.

"Count!" continued Zinaïda, "write out a ticket for M'sieur Voldémar!"

"It is not fair," returned the Count, with a slight Polish accent. He was a well-dressed, very handsome man, dark-haired, with expressive hazel eyes, a delicate white nose, and a thin moustache above his tiny mouth. "He has not been playing with us."

"It is not fair," echoed Bêlovzórov and the retired captain, a man of about forty years of age, marked by small-pox to disfigurement, curly-haired like an Arab, round-shouldered, bandy-legged, and dressed in an open military tunic without epaulettes.

"Write out a ticket, I tell you," reiterated Zinaïda. "What's the meaning of this mutiny? M'sieur Voldémar

is playing with us for the first time to-night, and he is not bound by the laws. It is no good grumbling; you must write it out, because that is my wish."

The Count shrugged his shoulders, but inclined his head obediently. He took a pen in his white, be-ringed hand, tore a strip of paper, and began to write.

"At all events, let the game be explained to Mr. Voldémar," said Lúshin, in a satirical tone, "or he will be quite lost. See, young man, we are playing at forfeits; the Princess has made a forfeit, and whoever gets the lucky number will have the right to kiss her hand. Do you understand what I say?"

I merely looked at him, and remained standing among the clouds; but the Princess jumped on to the chair again, and began to shake the hat again. They all clamoured round her, and I with them.

"Maydánov," said Zinaïda to a tall young man with a thin face, small dim eyes, and very long black hair, "you, as a poet, must be magnanimous, and give up your ticket to M'sieur Voldémar, so that he may have a double chance."

Maydánov refused, with a shake of his head and his long hair. I was the last to put my hand into the hat; I took a ticket, and opened it. Heavens! what were my feelings when I read on it the words "A kiss"!

"A kiss!" I called out involuntarily.

"Bravo, he has won!" cried the Princess. "How glad I am!"

She got down from the chair, and gave such a bright, sweet look, that my heart bounded within me.

“And are you glad?” she asked me.

“I?” I stammered, “I ——”

“Sell me your ticket,” cried Bêlovzórov, right in my ear. “I’ll give you a hundred rubles!”

I answered the hussar with such an indignant look, that Zinaïda clapped her hands, and Lúshin called out: “That’s a plucky fellow! But,” he continued, “as master of the ceremonies, I must see that all the rules are obeyed. M’sieur Voldémar, go down on one knee. We always do so.”

Zinaïda stood up in front of me, bent her head down a little to one side, as if better to observe me, and held out her hand to me with dignity. My eyes grew dim, and I dropped down on both knees, instead of on one as I had intended; and I put my lips to her hand so clumsily that the tip of my nose was slightly scratched by her fingernail.

“Well done!” cried Lúshin, as he helped me to get up.

We went on with our game. Zinaïda made me sit beside her. What punishments did she not devise! Amongst other things, she had to represent a statue; and she chose the unattractive Nirmátzki for a pedestal. She made him lie down, with his face to the ground, and his head doubled under. The laughter never ceased for a moment. To a boy brought up alone and soberly, in a house where some state was observed, this noise and

clatter, this free-and-easy, almost rough merriment, this unaccustomed mixing with strangers, were bewildering. I was absolutely intoxicated, as if with wine. I began to laugh and chatter louder than the rest, so that even the old Princess, who was engaged in the next room with some law official, whom she had called in to consult, came in to look at me. But I was so happy that, as people say, I did not care twopence whether people laughed at me or looked at me askance. Zinaïda continued to show a preference for me, and would not let me leave her side. On one occasion we had to sit side by side, our heads covered with the same silk handkerchief: I had to tell her my secret. I remember how our heads seemed suddenly enveloped by a warm, half-transparent, perfumed obscurity; how, in that obscurity, her eyes shone close and softly, and the warm breath came from her parted lips; how her teeth glittered, and the ends of her hair tickled and burned me. I was silent. She smiled mysteriously and roguishly, and, at length, whispered: "Well what is it?" But I merely blushed and laughed; I turned away, and scarcely breathed. We got tired of forfeits, and began to play at "Catch the ring."

How delighted I was when, because I yawned, Zinaïda gave me a sharp rap on the fingers; and that afterwards, when I pretended to be inattentive, she teased me by taking no notice of my stretched-out hands!

And what more did we not do in the course of that evening! We played the piano, we sang, we danced, we

represented a gipsy encampment; we dressed Nirmátzki up as a bear, and made him drink salt and water. Count Malévski showed us several card tricks, and finished, having shuffled the cards, by dealing himself all the trumps at whist, upon which Lúshin "congratulated him." Malévski recited to us some passages from his poem, "The Assassin" (in those days *le romantisme* was at its height), which he wanted to bring out in a black cover with the title printed thereon in blood-red letters. They took the hat from off his knees, and he was obliged to ransom it by dancing the Kazachká; they made the old servant, Vonifáti, wear a woman's cap; and Zinaïda put on a man's hat. It is impossible to count the things that we did. Bêlovzórov alone sat in a corner frowning and out of temper. Now and then his eyes seemed to be on fire, he got flushed, and looked as if he would in a moment rush amongst us and throw us down like nine-pins; but Zinaïda would glance at him and hold up her finger, and he subsided.

At last we got exhausted; the Princess herself, however much endurance (to use her own expression) she might have, and no screaming disturbed her, at last felt tired and wanted rest. Towards twelve o'clock supper was served, consisting of a piece of stale, dry cheese, and some kind of cold patties with minced ham, which, however, tasted to me better than any pies I had tasted. Of wine there was only one bottle, and that was a most peculiar one—dark, with a bulging neck, and the wine had a sort of

pink tint. However, no one drank any of it. Tired and happy to exhaustion, I left the house. As she said good-bye, Zinaïda pressed my hand, and smiled once more in her mysterious way.

The night air blew heavy and moist against my hot face; a storm was brewing. Black clouds took shape and moved across the sky, changing as they went their vaporous outlines. A light breeze fluttered uneasily among the dark trees, and somewhere afar off on the horizon, as if muttering to itself, the thunder rolled with a muffled angry sound.

I got to my room through the back door. My servant was asleep on the floor, and I had to step across him; as I did so he awoke, looked at me, and told me that my mother was again angry with me, and that she wanted to send for me as before, but that my father would not let her. I had never before gone to bed without saying good night to my mother and asking her blessing. But there was no help for it this time. I told my servant that I would undress myself alone, and I put out the light. But I neither undressed nor lay down.

I sat down and remained for a long time as if bewitched. My feelings were so new, so sweet. I sat there motionless, scarcely looking around me, breathing spasmodically, laughing to myself, recalling the past, and then inwardly growing cold at the thought that I was in love, that this was love. Zinaïda's face floated before me in the darkness, and it did not float away; it wore a

mysterious smile, her eyes looked at me with a side glance, enquiringly, meditatively, and with tenderness. Presently I went to my bed on tiptoe, and lay down gently without undressing, as if fearing to drive away by a brusque movement the thoughts which possessed me. I lay down, but did not close my eyes. Soon I noticed that pale reflections of some light or other kept appearing in the room. I sat up and looked toward the window. The window frames stood out clearly against the dimly and weirdly glistening panes. "It is a storm," I thought to myself; and a storm it was. But it was a long way off, so that the thunder was not audible; only in the heavens the long, dull flashes of lightning, branched like a tree, scarcely ceased. The lightning, indeed, did not so much flash as quiver and contract like the wings of a dying bird. I got up, went to the window, and stood there till the dawn. The lightning never stopped for a moment. It was what is popularly called a sparrow's night.\* I looked at the silent, sandy plain, at the dark mass of the Neskuchnaya garden, at the yellow walls of the distant buildings, which shivered, as it were, at each feeble flash. I looked at these, and I could not tear myself away. The noiseless lightning, with its long-continued flutterings, seemed to harmonise with the strange inarticulate feelings which flashed and quivered within me too. It began at length to dawn; and patches of ruby appeared in the

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\* *Vorobyinaya notch*'.

sky. As the sun rose, the lightning paled, and the flashes grew shorter ; they appeared at longer and longer intervals, and then disappeared altogether into the sober unmistakable light of the full-blown day. Within my breast, too, the flashing ceased. A feeling of great fatigue and great peacefulness came over me ; but the image of Zinaïda continued supreme before me. But even this image seemed more peaceful ; as a swan flying away from the weeds of the marshes, so did her image disengage itself from the unattractive figures of its surrounding, and as I fell to sleep I turned to her with a parting sense of confidence and admiration.

O, the tender feelings and gentle sounds, the mildness and the contentment of a touched heart, the hidden joy of the first emotions of love—where are ye now, where are ye ?

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## VIII.

The next morning at breakfast my mother scolded me—not so much, it is true, as I expected—and made me tell her how I had passed the last evening. I replied briefly, leaving out many incidents, and doing my best to give a harmless colour to the entertainment.

“All the same,” said my mother, “they are not *comme il faut*, and you had much better study and prepare for your examination than run after them.”



As I knew that my mother's cares for my education were confined to the delivery of those remarks, I did not consider it necessary to offer any reply. After breakfast, however, my father drew my arm through his, and, as we walked into the garden, made me tell him of all that I had seen at the Zasyékins'.

Strange was my father's influence over me, and strange were our relations with each other. He scarcely interfered at all with my education, and he but rarely spoke to me. But he was never severe with me, never scolded me; he respected my liberty—was even, if I may so express myself, courteous towards me; but he never drew me to him. I loved him, I admired him; he seemed to me the pattern of a gentleman—and, good heavens! with what joy would I not have clung to him had I not always felt his repelling hand! On the other hand, with a single word, a single movement, he could almost instantaneously arouse within me a feeling of unbounded trust; my soul opened to him—I talked with him as with an intelligent friend, or a familiar tutor; then, just as suddenly he would put me aside, and his hand would once more kindly and gently, but steadily, repel me.

Sometimes a joyous mood would seize him, and then he was ready to romp and play with me like a boy (he was fond of violent physical exercise); once—but only once!—he fondled me so tenderly, that I almost broke into tears. But this joyousness, this tenderness, they vanished without a trace; and what passed between us gave me no hopes for

the future—it was as if I had seen everything in a dream. At times, when I looked at his bright, clever, handsome face, my heart fluttered, and my whole nature yearned towards him. He perceived exactly what was passing within me; he would give me a passing pat on the cheek, and either go away, or turn to some occupation; or he would suddenly turn as it were to ice, as only he could, and then I, too, drew myself together and became cold. His rare fits of affectionateness were never occasioned by my mute though understood entreaties; they always came unexpectedly. When I have reflected in later years on my father's character, I have come to the conclusion that he had no real interest in me or in family life; he was given up to something else, which he enjoyed to the full.

“Don't get under anyone's thumb, and take what you can yourself: to belong to one's self, that is the whole secret of life,” said he to me one day. On another occasion I was indulging as a youthful democrat in some remarks on liberty (that day he was what I called “good-natured,” and I could talk to him on any subject).

“Liberty!” he cried. “And do you know, now, what makes a man free?”

“What?”

“Will, his own will, and with that he can get power too, which is better than liberty. Learn how to exercise your will, and you can become free and can command.”

Above all things, my father wanted to make the most of life—and he did so. Perhaps he had a presentiment that

he would not long be able to profit by the "secret" of life : he died at the age of forty-two.

I gave my father a detailed account of my visit to the Zasyékins. He listened half-attentively, half-carelessly, sitting on a bench, and drawing on the sand with the tip of his riding-wip. Now and then he smiled, looking at me with a bright, amused expression, and irritating me with little questions and remarks. I had at first resolved not even to mention the name of Zinaïda ; but I could not restrain myself, and I began to praise her, to my father's continued amusement. Afterwards he reflected a little, then he stretched himself and rose.

I remembered that, as we came out of doors, he had ordered a horse to be saddled. He was a fine rider, and could break the wildest horses much better than Mr. Rarey.

"Can I go with you, Papa?" I asked.

"No," he answered with his usual expression of mingled indifference and amiability. "You can go alone, if you like ; but tell the groom I am not going to ride."

He turned away and walked off quickly. I followed him with my eyes, till the gateway hid him ; then I saw his hat bobbing along the wall. He went to the Zasyékins.

He did not stay there more than an hour ; but on leaving he went into the town and did not come home till the evening.

After dinner I myself went to the Zaséykins. In the

drawing-room I found no one but the old Princess. On seeing me she scratched her head beneath her cap with a knitting-needle, and asked me if I could write out a petition for her. I replied that I would do so with pleasure, and sat down on the edge of a chair.

"But look here, you must make large letters," she said, as she handed me a dirty sheet of paper; "and can't it be done to-day, please?"

"I will copy it out to-day."

The door of the next room was just barely opened, and Zinaïda's face appeared, pale and thoughtful, and with carelessly thrown-back hair. She looked at me with large cold eyes, and gently closed the door.

"Zina, Zina!" cried the Princess; but Zinaïda gave no answer.

I took the petition, and spent the whole evening at it.

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## IX.

On that day my "passion" began. I felt then, I remember, a feeling somewhat analogous to that which a man must experience on entering an office for the first time. I was no longer a mere boy; I was a lover. I said that on that day my "passion" began. I might have added that my sufferings began on that day too. I

pined for Zinaïda when I was not with her. I was incapable of mental activity; everything fell from my hands; and for whole days my thoughts were closely concentrated on her. I pined—yet I was no better off in her company. I was jealous; I was aware of my insignificance; I was stupidly sulky, and stupidly humble: and yet an irresistible force drew me towards her, and I never entered her room without a thrill of delight. Zinaïda guessed at once that I had fallen in love with her; indeed, I did not attempt any concealment. She enjoyed my passion; she made fun of me, petted me, and tormented me. It is sweet to be the sole source, the autocratic and irresponsible cause of another's greatest joy and deepest misery—and I was as soft wax in Zinaïda's hands. However, I was not the only one who was in love with her; all the men who visited the house were mad about her; and she held them all in chains, and kept them at her feet. It amused her to rouse their hopes and fears, to turn them round according to her whim (this she called knocking people together); and they had no idea of resisting, and submitted to her most willingly. About her whole person, full of life and beauty as it was, there was a particularly fascinating mixture of artfulness and carelessness, of artificiality and simplicity, of quietness and liveliness. Everything that she did or said, each of her movements, possessed a delicate, refined charm, and displayed an original, playful power. There was play, too, in her ever-changing face; at almost one and the same moment it could express

mockery, thoughtfulness, and passion. Traces of the most varied feelings, light and swift as the shadows of clouds on a sunny, windy day, passed over her eyes and lips.

Each of her admirers was necessary to her. Bèlovzórov, whom she sometimes called "my wild animal," sometimes simply "my," would gladly have leapt into the fire for her. Not trusting to his intellectual capabilities and other qualities, he was for ever proposing to her to marry him, giving her to understand that his rivals were merely amusing themselves. Maydánov touched the poetic chords in her nature; he was, like most writers, a somewhat cold man, and continually assured her, and perhaps persuaded himself, that he worshipped her; he addressed her in interminable poems, which he recited to her with a particular half assumed, half sincere enthusiasm. Although she sympathised with him, she laughed at him almost imperceptibly; she did not much believe in him, and, after listening to his effusions, she would make him read Púshkin aloud, in order, as she said, to clear the air. Lúshin, the satirical, outwardly cynical doctor, knew Zinaïda better, and loved her better than any of the others, though he blamed her both behind her back and to her face. She respected him, but did not spare him, and would, with a peculiar, malicious pleasure, make him feel that he, too, was in her hands.

"I am a coquette, I am heartless, I have an actress' nature," she said to him one day, in my presence. "Very

good ! but just give me your hand, and I will run a pin into it. You will feel ashamed before this young man, it will hurt you ; but all the same, Mr. Truthful, you will be pleased to laugh."

Lúshin blushed and turned away, biting his lips, but he ended by holding out his hand. She pricked him, and he actually did laugh, and so did she, running the pin in to a good depth, and looking into his eyes, which in vain wandered in all directions.

But the most incomprehensible to me were the relations between Zinaïda and Count Malévski. He was a handsome, clever, accomplished man ; but there was something doubtful, something false about him which struck even a boy of sixteen like me, and I was surprised that Zinaïda did not notice it. Perhaps she did notice that false note in him, and experienced no feeling of repugnance. Her irregular bringing-up, strange acquaintances and habits, the constant presence of her mother, the poverty and disorder which reigned in the house, everything, in fact, beginning with the very liberty which the girl enjoyed, the consciousness of superiority over those who surrounded her, developed in her a species of semi-contemptuous carelessness and laxity. Whatever might happen—if Vonifáti came in and announced that there was no sugar in the house, if some wretched gossip crept out, or if some of the guests began to quarrel—whatever it might be, she only shook her curls with a "What rubbish!" Little did she care.

On the other hand, my blood boiled when Malévski walked up to her with the artful tread of a fox, and leant gracefully over the back of her chair, and began whispering in her ear with a self-satisfied, insinuating smile. She sat with her arms folded on her breast, looking attentively at him, and with a smile, shaking her head.

“What pleasure can you find in Malévski’s visits?” I one day asked her.

“He has such fine moustaches,” she replied. “But that’s not in your line.”

“Don’t imagine,” she said to me on another occasion, “that I am in love with him. No, I could never love anyone on whom I was obliged to look down. I must have someone who could master me. But I shall never find him, merciful heavens! I shall never fall into anyone’s arms,—no, no!”

“Then you’ll never fall in love, I suppose.”

“And what about you? I suppose I don’t love you?” she said, hitting me with her glove.

Zinaïda certainly made fun of me to a great extent. For three weeks I saw her every day, and during that time what did she not do with me. She seldom visited us, which I did not regret, for in our house she became a young lady of society, a princess—and I avoided her. I was afraid of committing myself before my mother. The latter was not at all well-disposed towards Zinaïda, and observed us not over-favourably. My father I did not fear in this way. He took no notice of me, and to her he spoke



very seldom, but particularly cleverly and pointedly. I left off working and reading, I even left off my walks in the neighbourhood, my rides. I hovered about the Zasyékins' house like a beetle that is tied by the leg. Indeed, I should have stopped there altogether, if it had not been impossible. My mother scolded me, and sometimes Zinaïda herself sent me away. On those occasions I shut myself up in my room, or went down to the extreme end of the garden, and clambered on the top of the standing remnants of a high stone orangery. I used to let my feet hang over the wall which ran along the road, and would sit there by the hour together, looking and looking, but seeing nothing. Close at hand a few white butterflies were idly fluttering about some dusty nettles, and not far off, on a broken red brick, was perched a sturdy little sparrow, chirruping lustily as he pirouetted round and spread his tail. The crows, who still mistrusted me, cawed forth from time to time, high, high up amid the bare crown of a birch tree, amidst whose sparse foliage the sun and the breeze gently played. Now and then there floated on the air the quiet, sad echo of the Don monastery's bells; and I sat, and gazed and listened, and was filled with a nameless feeling, in which seemed combined joy and sadness, a presentiment of the future, and the desire and the fear of life. But this I could not then understand, and I could not have given a name to what was surging within me, or I should have given it one name—the name of Zinaïda.

Zinaïda was for ever toying with me, and I grew excited

and was overcome with delight ; then suddenly she would repel me, and I dared not approach her or look at her. I remember that for several days together Zinaïda was very cold to me, and I became quite timid, and went to the Zasyékins' in fear and trembling, and tried to keep near the old Princess, although at that time she was very ill-tempered and noisy ; her affairs were in a bad way, and she had already had two interviews with the law officer of the district.

One day, as I was walking near the boundary of our garden, I saw Zinaïda, seated motionless on the grass, supporting herself with both hands. I wanted to withdraw cautiously ; but she suddenly looked up, and made an imperative sign to me. I stood still, as if benumbed ; I did not understand her at once. She repeated her sign. I at once jumped over the partition, and gladly ran towards her ; but she stopped me with a look, and pointed to the little path at two paces from her. In my confusion, and not knowing what to do, I knelt down, on one knee, at the edge of the path. So pale was she, such bitter sadness, such utter weariness, were stamped on her every feature, that my heart was pained for her, and I involuntarily whispered : " What is the matter with you ? "

Zinaïda put out her hand, plucked a leaf of grass, bit it, and threw it away as far as she could.

" Are you very fond of me ? " she asked me, at length.  
" Yes ? "

I made no answer; and why should I, indeed?

"Yes," she repeated, looking at me as before, "it is so. Just those eyes," she added thoughtfully, and covering her face with her hands. "Everything disgusts me," she muttered; "I should like to go to the other end of the world; I cannot bear this, I don't know what to do. And what a future is in store for me! I feel so wretched. My God, I feel so wretched!"

"Why?" I asked timidly.

Zinaïda did not answer me, but merely shrugged her shoulders. I remained kneeling, and looked at her with the deepest concern. Every word of hers seemed to cut into my heart. At that moment I would willingly have given my life to have made her happy. I looked at her; and although I did not understand why she felt oppressed, I had a vivid vision of her suddenly running into the garden, under the stress of overpowering sorrow, and falling to the ground as if mown down. All around was bright and green; the wind murmured amidst the foliage, sometimes swaying a long raspberry branch over Zinaïda's head; some doves were cooing; and the bees were buzzing and flying low above the thin grass. There was a lovely blue sky overhead, but I felt so sad.

"Read me some poetry," said Zinaïda softly, supporting herself on her elbow. "I like it so much when you read poetry. You sing it, but that doesn't matter—that belongs to youth. Read 'On the Hills of Georgia.' But first of all, sit down."

I sat down and read "On the Hills of Georgia."\*

"'Because it cannot but love,'" repeated Zinaïda.  
 "That is just the beauty of poetry. It tells us that which is not, which is not only better than what is, but even nearer to the truth. 'Because it cannot but love'—one would like not to love, but one must!"

She became silent; she shuddered and rose.

"Come," she said; "Maydánov is with mamma. He brought me his poem, and I came away and left him. He is angry, too, now. But what can I do? You will know all one of these days,—but don't be angry with me."

Zinaïda hastily pressed my hand, and hurried forward. We went indoors. Maydánov began to read us his "Assassin," which had just been published. But I could not listen. He declaimed his iambics in a chanting manner; the rhymes alternated and jingled with the hollow noise of little bells; while I sate staring at Zinaïda, wondering what her last words could mean.

\* *On the Hills of Georgia (Na khólmakh Grúziy)* is a beautiful fragment by Púshkin. Literally, it is as follows:—

On the hills of Georgia lies the cloak of night;  
 Arágvá rushes by me.  
 I am sad but not oppressed; my grief is serene;  
 My grief is full of thee,  
 Of thee alone, of thee! My dejection  
 Nothing troubles, nothing disturbs,  
 And once again my heart bleeds and loves, because  
 It cannot but love.

“ Or is it that a secret rival  
Hath suddenly o’ermastered thee ? ”

cried Maydánov, all at once.

My eyes met Zinaïda’s. She looked down, and blushed slightly. I saw that she coloured, and I grew cold with fright. I had always been jealous of her ; but never till this moment did it occur to me that she was in love. “ My God, she is in love ! ”

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## X.

My real sufferings now commenced. I racked my brain for an idea ; and I kept a perpetual, though as far as possible a secret, watch over Zinaïda. A change was going on within her. That was evident. She went out for long walks alone. Sometimes she would not show herself to visitors, but would remain sitting for hours together in her own room, which she had never done before.

I suddenly became, at all events in my own estimation, extraordinarily acute. “ Is it this one ? or that one ? ” I asked myself, going, in my restless mind, from one of her admirers to the other. Count Malévski (although I was ashamed for Zinaïda’s sake to confess it to myself) appeared to me the most dangerous of them.

My acuteness did not enable me to see farther than the end of my own nose, and my secrecy apparently deceived

no one ; at all events Doctor Lúshin soon found me out. He, too, had changed of late. He had grown thinner. He often laughed, as before, but his laughter was, so to say, monosyllabic, deeper, and more malicious ; and an uncontrollable nervous excitement had taken the place of his former delicate irony and cynicism.

“What are you perpetually wandering about here for, young man ?” said he to me one day, when we chanced to be left alone in the Zasyékins’ drawing room. (Zinaïda had not yet returned from her walk, and upstairs we could hear the shrill voice of the Princess, who was squabbling with a house-maid.) “You ought to be studying, working—while you are young. But what do you do here ?”

“You don’t know that I don’t work at home,” I replied, with a certain arrogance, and with embarrassment also.

“Work at home, indeed ! Why you never give a thought to work. However, I won’t quarrel with you. It is natural enough at your age. But your choice is an utterly wrong one. Don’t you see what sort of house this is ?”

“I don’t understand you,” I said.

“You don’t ? Then so much the worse for you. I think it is my duty to give you a warning. Old bachelors like us may come here ; why not ? We are seasoned, we don’t want looking after. But your young skin is sensitive ; this is a bad atmosphere for you, believe me, you may catch the infection.”

“How so ?”

"Well, are you in a healthy state at the present moment? Are you in a normal condition? Is what you are feeling at the present time beneficial to you?"

"But what am I feeling, then?" I said, though in my heart I knew the doctor was right.

"Ah! young man, young man," continued Lúshin, in a tone which seemed to suggest that those two words contained a grave reproach to me, "you may dissimulate as much as you please, but what is in your mind one can still, thank God! read in your face. But, however, it is no good talking. I should not come here myself, were I not (the doctor bit his lip)—a queer fellow. But what puzzles me is that you, with your brains, don't see what is going on around you."

"What is going on?" I said, pricking up my ears.

Lúshin looked at me with an expression of amused pity.

"I am doing him a good turn," he said, as if to himself; "it is necessary to tell him. In a word," he said, raising his voice, "I repeat to you, the atmosphere here doesn't do for you. You enjoy yourself, it smells very pleasant in an orangery, but you can't live in one. Take my advice—take up Kaydánov again."

The Princess now came in and began to complain to the doctor about her toothache. Presently Zinaïda appeared.

"There, Doctor," said the Princess, "you must scold her. She has been drinking iced water the whole day. That surely can't be good for her with her weak chest."

"Why do you do that?" asked Lúshin.

"What harm can it do me?"

"What harm? It can give you cold and kill you."

"Indeed? Really? Then—that's one way of doing it!"

"What an idea!" exclaimed the doctor.

"What an idea!" she repeated. "Is life, then, so delightful? Just look round. Well, is it? Perhaps you think I can't understand or feel that. It pleases me to drink iced water, and you can seriously assure me that a life like this is so precious that one must not risk it for a moment's pleasure—I don't speak of happiness."

"That's it," said Lúshin, "caprice and independence. Those two words exhaust you. Your whole nature is in them."

Zinaïda gave a nervous laugh.

"You are too late, my dear Doctor. You are a bad observer; you are behindhand. You must put on your spectacles. It is not a question of caprice with me now; to make fun of you, of myself—it's splendid! and as regards independence—— M'sieur Voldémar," said Zinaïda suddenly, stamping her foot, "don't make such a dismal face. I can't bear to be pitied." She left the room quickly.

"This atmosphere is very, very bad for you, young man," said Lúshin to me once more.

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## XI.

That same evening all the *habitués* of the house assembled at the Zasyékins: I was of the number. The conversation fell upon Maydánov's poem, which Zinaïda frankly praised.

"But do you know," she said to him, "if I were a poet I should choose different subjects. May be that it's all nonsense, but I sometimes have strange thoughts, especially when I cannot sleep, towards morning, when the sky begins to grow at once rosy and grey. I should, for example,—but you won't laugh at me?"

"No, no," we all cried at once.

"I should describe," she continued, crossing her hands on her breast, and looking away, "a number of young girls in a large boat, at night, on a noiseless stream. The moon is shining, and all the girls wear white robes and wreaths of white flowers, and are singing something like a hymn."

"I understand, I understand; go on," said Maydánov significantly and reflectively.

"Suddenly there is a noise on the banks: laughter, tambourines, torches. It is a crowd of Bacchantæ singing and screaming. There is a picture for you to work up, Monsieur le poète; only I should like the torches to be red, and to smoke a great deal, and the

eyes of the Bacchantæ to sparkle beneath their wreaths, which must be dark. And don't forget the tiger's skin and claws, and plenty of gold."

"Where should the gold be?" asked Maydánov, throwing back his thick hair, and spreading out his nostrils.

"Where?—on the shoulders, and hands, and feet, —everywhere. They say that in the olden times women wore golden rings round their ankles. The Bacchantæ call the girls in the boat to them. The girls leave off singing their hymn, they cannot go on with it, but they don't move; the stream carries them to the bank. Then suddenly one of them silently rises. That must be well described, how she gently rises in the moonlight, and her companions are afraid. She steps over the edge of the boat, the Bacchantæ surround her, and carry her off into the night, into darkness. Imagine the columns of smoke, and how everything gets confused. You only hear the crying of the girls—her wreath remains lying on the bank."

Zinaïda ceased. ("Oh, she is in love!" I thought to myself again.)

"Is that all?" asked Maydánov.

"That is all," she replied.

"That can't be the subject of a complete poem," said he, with authority; "but I shall use your idea for some lyrics."

"In the romantic manner?" asked Malévski.

"Of course, in the romantic, the Byronic manner."

"For my part," said the young count, with nonchalance, "I prefer Hugo to Byron—he is more interesting."

"Hugo is a writer of the first order," returned Maydánov; "and my friend Tonkoshéev in his Spanish novel *El Trovador* ——"

"Ah! that's the book with the marks of interrogation turned the wrong way, isn't it?" said Zinaïda.

"Yes, the Spaniards always print them so. I was going to say that Tonkoshéev——"

"Now, you will only begin to quarrel again about the classics and the romantics," interrupted Zinaïda a second time. "Let us rather play at something."

"At forfeits," suggested Lúshin.

"No, that's tedious, but at comparisons. (Zinaïda herself had invented this game: a subject was named, and then everybody compared it with something, and whoever made the best comparison won a prize.) She went to the window, the sun was just setting, and some thin white clouds floated high up against the sky.

"What are those clouds like?" asked Zinaïda, and, without waiting for an answer, she said: "I have it. They are like the purple sails of Cleopatra's gilded ship, on which she went to meet Mark Antony. Do you remember, Maydánov, you told me about that not long ago?"

We all, like Polonius, came to the conclusion that the clouds reminded us precisely of those sails, and that none of us could make a better comparison.

"But how old was Antony?" asked Zinaïda.

"He was still a young man," said Malévski.

"Yes, a young man," said Maydánov, in confirmation.

"I beg your pardon," exclaimed Lúshin, "he was over forty."

"Over forty," repeated Zinaïda, throwing a rapid glance at him.

I soon went home. "She is in love," I whispered involuntarily; "but with whom?"

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## XII.

A few days passed. Zinaïda became more strange and incomprehensible than ever. I went one day to see her, and found her sitting at the table, resting her head on its sharp edge, and her face covered with tears.

"Ah, it's you!" she said with a bitter smile. "Come here!"

I went up to her; she laid her hand on my head and began to play with my hair and twist it.

"You are in grief," I at last said.

"In grief? I am indeed!" she exclaimed. "Oh!" she suddenly cried, seeing that she had pulled a few hairs from my head: "Oh! what have I done? Poor M'sieur Voldémar!"

She carefully arranged the torn-out hairs, and wound them round her finger, and made them into a little ring.

"I will put your hair into a locket, and wear it," she said, while the tears still glistened in her eyes. "It may comfort you a little bit. And now, good-bye."

I went home, where I found something unpleasant going on. My mother was having an explanation with my father. She had reproached something or other, and he, as was his usual custom, remained cold and polite, said nothing, and soon left the room. I could not hear what was the subject of the explanation; it was, indeed, no affair of mine. I only remember that, after it was over, my mother sent for me, and expressed considerable displeasure at my frequent visits to the Princess Zasyékin, who was, she said, *une femme capable de tout*. I kissed her hand (which I always did when I wanted to cut a conversation short) and went to my room. Zinaïda's tears had thoroughly upset me, I did not know what to make of it all, and was ready to cry myself. I was still a child, despite my sixteen years. I did not even think any more about Malévski, although Bêlovzórov grew more terrible every day, and glared at the crafty Count like a wolf at a lamb. I could think neither of anything nor anybody. I was lost in conjectures, and frequented lonely places. A favourite one of mine was the ruined orangery. I selected the high wall of it, and sate there—sit there yet, it almost seems—such an unhappy, lonely, and sad

boy, that I pitied myself; and how consoling were these dismal feelings, and how intoxicated did I not grow with my grief!

One day I sate perched on my wall, looking into distance, and listening to the sound of bells, when suddenly I felt something—a breeze, and not a breeze, and not a shiver, but just as if I were being blown at, a sensation of something being near. I looked down. Along the road at my feet, in a grey dress, with a pink parasol resting on her shoulder, came Zinaïda. She was walking quickly, but she saw me and stopped; and, pushing back the brim of her straw hat, looked up to me with her soft eyes.

“What are you doing up at that height?” she asked, with a strange smile. “Now,” she continued, “you are always telling me that you love me: jump down here, if you really do love me.”

These words had not left her lips before I flew down, as if I had been pushed off the wall. It was about five yards high. I alighted on my feet, but the shock was so great, that I fell over, and lay unconscious for a moment. When I came to myself, I, without opening my eyes, felt that Zinaïda was at my side.

“My poor boy,” she said, bending over me, in a voice that trembled with tenderness, “how could you do that, how could you listen to me? Indeed, I love you—there, get up.”

Her bosom heaved against my cheek, her hands touched

my head, and all at once—what did I not feel then!—her soft, fresh lips, began to cover my face with kisses, and touched mine. But Zinaïda probably guessed, by my expression, that I had recovered consciousness, although I kept my eyes closed; and, getting up quickly, she said:

“Now, rascal, young madman, get up directly! What are you lying in the dust there for?”

I stood up.

“Give me, my parasol—I must have thrown it down,—and don’t look at me like that! What have you done? Have you bruised yourself—stung yourself with nettles? I tell you not to look at me like that. But he doesn’t understand anything, doesn’t answer,” she said, half to herself. “Go home, M’sieur Voldémar, and put yourself to rights; and don’t dare to come after me, or I shall be angry, and shall never again——”

She did not complete her sentence, and went away quickly. I sate down on the road—my legs would not support me. I had stung my hands with the nettles, my back hurt me, and my head was swimming: but such happiness as I felt at that moment I have never felt again in all my life. It cost me some gentle pains in all my limbs, and betrayed itself by enthusiastic shouts and leaps. Indeed, I was still a child.

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## XIII.

I was so happy and proud the whole of that day; I retained so vividly the sensation of Zinaïda's kisses; I recalled her every word with such excitement and trembling; I so nursed my new, unexpected joy, that I even grew afraid, and did not want to see her, the cause of these new emotions. It seemed to me that I had nothing more to ask of fate; that now was the moment to "prepare, heave a last deep sigh, and die."

But the next day, when I went to the Zasyékins, I felt terribly confused, which confusion I vainly endeavoured to conceal beneath a mask of decorous nonchalance becoming a man who wants to show that he can keep a secret. Zinaïda received me just as usual, without any emotion; she merely shook her finger at me, and asked me if I had not some blue marks on me. All my decorous nonchalance, and my embarrassment too, vanished. Of course I had not expected anything particular; but Zinaïda's calmness was like a shower of cold water to me. I saw that I was as a child in her eyes, and I felt very downcast. Zinaïda was walking up and down the room, and a passing smile came over her face every time that she looked at me. But her thoughts were far off—I could see that. I wondered whether I should speak myself about yesterday's occurrence, and ask her where she was going so hurriedly, so as to



know definitely. But I said nothing, and sat down in a corner.

Bêlovzórov came in, much to my relief.

"I have not yet found you a quiet riding-horse," he said to Zinaïda, in his rough voice; "Freytag guarantees one; but I am doubtful, I am afraid. . . ."

"And may I ask," said Zinaïda, "of what you are afraid?"

"What of? Well, you see, you can't ride. God knows what may happen! What on earth put the idea into your head?"

"That is my affair, *M'sieur le Sauvage*. In that case, I will ask Piotr Vassilyévitch." (That was my father's name.)

I was surprised that she should so freely and easily mention his name, as if she were assured of his readiness to oblige her.

"That's it, is it?" exclaimed Bêlovzórov. "You want to ride with him?"

"With him, or someone else,—that is all the same to you. Only not with you."

"Not with me," repeated Bêlovzórov. "As you like. Well, shall I get you a horse?"

"Yes; but look here, I do not want a cow: I warn you that I want to jump."

"Jump as much as you please. With whom do you want to do that—with Malévski?"

"And why not with him, warrior? But calm yourself,

and don't flash your eyes so. I will take you too. You know that for me Malévski is now—fi!" She gave a shake of the head.

"You say that to keep me quiet," said Bêlovzórov.

She looked at him with screwed-up eyes.

"That quiets you then? Oh, oh, warrior!" she at last exclaimed, as if she could find no other word. "And you, M'sieur Voldémar, would you come with us?"

"I don't care about it with a number of people," I muttered, without looking up.

"You prefer a *tête-à-tête*? Well, just as you like," she said, with a sigh. "Now go, quickly, Bêlovzórov. I must have the horse to-morrow."

"But the money?" put in the Princess. "Where will you get that?"

Zinaïda knitted her brows.

"I won't ask you for it; Bêlovzórov will trust me."

"Trust you, trust you," muttered the Princess. Suddenly she called out at the top of her voice: "Dúniashka!"

"Maman, I gave you a little bell," remarked her daughter.

"Dúniashka!" she called once more.

Bêlovzórov bowed, and I came away with him. Zinaïda did not ask me to stop.

## XIV.

The next morning I rose early, cut myself a switch, and went off to the barrier. I thought I would go off and banish grief. It was a lovely day, bright, and not too hot; a fresh, merry breeze swept along the earth, with measured murmur and playfulness, touching everything, but disturbing nothing. I wandered for a long time over the hills and in the woods. I did not feel happy. I had left home with the intention of devoting myself to melancholy; but youth, the lovely weather, the fresh air, the pleasure of rapid exercise, the sweet lonely rest on the thick grass, these all produced their effect. The recollection of those never-to-be-forgotten words, of those kisses, again rushed in upon me. I was happy to think that, at any rate, Zinaïda could not but recognize my resolution, my heroism. Others are better in her eyes than me; be it so! but others only say what they will do, whereas I did it. Could I, indeed, but do something more for her! My fancy now began to play. I thought how I would save her from the hands of enemies; how, stained with blood, I would rescue her from prison, and would die at her feet. Then my mind wandered to a picture that hung up in our drawing-room at home, representing Malek-Adel carrying off Mathilda; and then my attention was attracted by a speckled woodpecker, which laboriously raised itself on to a thin twig of a birch-tree, from behind which it

looked out restlessly, first to the right and then to the left, like a player from behind his double-bass.

Then I began singing "Not the white snow," and drifted into the then popular ballad, "I await thee when the playful zephyr." These I followed up by a recitation of Eermak's apostrophe to the stars from Khomyakóv's\* tragedy, and even tried to compose something myself of a sentimental description. But I got no farther than a single line, which was to terminate the whole poem: "O Zinaïda! Zinaïda!" Meanwhile, the dinner hour was approaching, and I began to go down into the valley, and followed a narrow sandy path which wound through it into the town. Behind me I heard the dull echo of horse's hoofs: I looked round, and, in spite of myself, stood still and took off my cap. I saw my father and Zinaïda riding side by side; he was bending over and speaking to her, resting his hand on the neck of her horse. She listened in silence, looking down with a serious expression, and biting her lips. At first I saw only them, but in a few moments Bêlovzôrov came riding round one of the bends of the valley in his hussar's uniform and jacket, on a foaming black horse. The fine creature shook his head, snorted, and reared; his rider tightened his rein and used his spurs. I turned off along a side path. I saw my father gather up his reins, and lean back from Zinaïda;

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\* Alekséi Stepánovich Khomyakóv (1804-60), a distinguished poet and dramatist of Liberal and Panslavonic tendency. For a time a soldier, he took part in the Turkish campaign of 1828. He made important contributions to philology. He wrote a tragedy called *Ermak*—the Conqueror of Siberia.

she slowly raised her eyes to his, and then they both set off at a gallop. Bêlovzórov plunged after them, with rattling sabre. "He is as red as a lobster," I said to myself; "but she, why is she so pale—and after riding the whole morning?"

I hurried home, arriving just in time for dinner. I found my father already seated in his arm-chair, fresh and new-shaven, with changed clothes, reading to my mother, in his steady, resonant voice, the *feuilleton* of the *Journal des Débats*. The latter was not listening attentively, and when she saw me asked where I had been all the morning, adding that she did not like my wandering about goodness knows where, with goodness knows whom. I was just about to reply that I had been out alone; but I looked at my father, and, I know not why, said nothing.

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## XV.

During the next five or six days I scarcely saw Zinaïda; she gave herself out as ill, which did not prevent all the habitués of the Zasyékins, from being on duty (as they termed it) as usual. Maydánov was the only absentee. As soon as there was nothing to excite him his spirits fell, and he bored himself. Bêlovzórov sat gloomily in the corner, tightly buttoned up, and very red. The delicate face of Malévski wore a perpetual, somewhat malevolent, smile; he had evidently fallen into disfavour with

Zinaïda, but paid great attention to the old princess, and went with her in a hackney carriage to see the Governor-General. However, the visit was not a success, and turned out rather unpleasantly for Malévski, for an old story came to light there about some infantry officers, and Malévski was obliged to offer an explanation, and to excuse himself on account of his inexperience. Lúshin put in an appearance once or twice a day, but he did not stop long. I was rather afraid of him since our recent conversation, but I nevertheless felt a sincere liking for him. I went one day with him for a walk in the Neskúchnaya garden; he was very affectionate and good-natured, and told me the names and properties of the different flowers and grapes. Suddenly he exclaimed, point-blank, so to say, striking his forehead: "And I, fool that I am, thought that she was a *coquette*! Apparently it is sweet to sacrifice oneself for others."

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"I mean nothing," he answered abruptly.

Zinaïda avoided me; the sight of me, I could not but notice it, produced an unpleasant effect upon her. She turned away from me involuntarily—and just that involuntariness made me so miserable. But there was nothing to be done but to keep out of her sight, and watch her from a distance, which I could not always succeed in doing. As before, an incomprehensible change came over her; her face seemed different, and her whole person seemed different. This change I noticed particularly one

warm still evening. I was sitting on a little bench under a spreading elder bush. That bench was a favourite place of mine ; from it I could see the window of Zinaïda's room. As I sate, a little bird hopped about amid the darkening foliage over my head ; a grey cat, after stretching itself, crept cautiously into the garden ; and the first cock-chafers buzzed heavily in the air, which was still transparent, though the light was nearly gone. I looked up at the window, waiting to see if it would not open : which it shortly did, and Zinaïda appeared at it. She had on a white dress, and she herself, her face, shoulders, and hands, was as white as her dress. For a long time she remained motionless, looking fixedly straight before her, from under her knitted brows. I had never yet seen her with such an expression. She clasped her hands tightly, very tightly, raised them to her lips, her forehead, and suddenly, separating her hands, she pushed her hair behind her ears with a shake of the head, and with a certain resolute effort lowered her face, drew in, and shut the window.

Three days later I met her in the garden. I was going to move aside, but she herself stopped me.

"Give me your hand," she said, with her former sweetness. "We have not had a chat for a long time."

I looked at her ; her eyes shined softly, and she smiled, but as if through an all but transparent mist.

"Are you still unwell ? " I asked.

"No ; now that is all over," she said, plucking a small

red rose. "I am a little fatigued, but that too will pass off."

"And will you become once more as you used to be?"

Zinaïda held up the rose to her face, and I fancied that the red of the rose leaves was reflected on her cheeks.

"Have I changed?" she asked.

"Yes, you have changed," I answered slowly.

"I was cold to you, I know," she commenced, "but you must not pay any attention to that. I could not be otherwise. But why speak of that?"

"You did not wish me to love you—that was it!" I exclaimed sadly, involuntarily moved.

"No, it was not. You may love me, but not as before."

"How then?"

"We will be friends—that's how!"

Zanaïda held the rose for me to smell.

"Listen to me. I am so much older than you, you see; I might be your aunt. Well, your eldest sister, at all events. And you——"

"I am a child, you think," I interrupted.

"Well, yes, a child; but a dear, good, clever child, whom I love very much. Shall I tell you something? From this day you shall be my page; and you must remember that pages must not run away from their mistresses. This shall be the mark of your new dignity," she added, putting the rose in my button-hole; "the mark of our favour."



"I received other favours from you formerly," I muttered.

"Oh," cried Zinaïda, looking at me out of the corners of her eyes: "what a memory he has! Well, I don't refuse you now."

She bent over me, and gave me a pure tranquil kiss on my forehead.

As soon as I looked at her, she turned away; and saying, "Follow me, my page," she went indoors.

I went after her, still wondering. "Is it possible," I thought, "that this gentle sedate girl is the Zinaïda whom I knew?"

Her walk seemed to me more composed, and her whole figure more dignified and well-shapen. And, ye heavens! with what new vigour did my love not blaze forth!

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## XVI.

After dinner the guests met as usual at the Zasyékins, and Zinaïda made her appearance.

We were in full force: everyone was present, as on that first, by me never-to-be-forgotten, evening. Even Nir-mátski was there, dragging himself about.

The first to make his appearance on this occasion was Maydánov, who brought some new verses with him. We again played at forfeits, but without the former extra-

vagances, follies, and noise; the gipsy element had vanished.

Zinaïda gave a new constitution to our meeting. I sat next to her in my quality of page. Among other things she proposed that every one who had to pay a forfeit should tell one of his dreams; but that did not succeed very well. The dreams were either uninteresting (Bêlovzórov dreamed that his horse had a wooden head, and was being fed with carp) or unnatural and made-up. Maydánov treated us to a whole story, with vaults, angels with lyres, talking flowers, and sounds coming from afar.

Zinaïda would not let him finish. "If we are to have original compositions," she said, "then let everyone tell something out of his own head."

Bêlovzórov's turn came first. The young hussar was confused.

"I can't invent anything," he cried.

"What nonsense!" said Zinaïda. "Well, suppose you were married, and tell us how you would live with your wife. Would you lock her up?"

"I should lock her up."

"And you would sit with her?"

"Most certainly."

"Charming!" said Zinaïda; "but suppose she got tired of that, and deceived you?"

"I should kill her."

"But if she ran away?"

"I should catch her and kill her all the same."

"Just so. But let us suppose I were your wife—what would you do then?"

Bélovzórov paused.

"I should kill myself."

Zinaïda smiled.

"I see, you don't make a long story of it." She looked up at the ceiling and reflected. "Now listen," she said at length; "this is what I have made up. Imagine a splendid ball in a magnificent hall on a summer night. Everywhere there are gold, marble, crystal, silk, lights, diamonds, flowers, perfumes, and every device of luxury."

"Are you fond of luxury?" interrupted Lúshin.

"When it is pretty. I like everything that is pretty."

"Better than beautiful things?"

"That's malicious. I don't understand. Don't interrupt me. The ball is splendid, then. There are a great many men, all young and handsome and brave; and they are all desperately in love with the queen."

"Are there no women present?" asked Malévski.

"No; or—wait a moment—yes, there are."

"All ugly?"

"All charming. But the men are all in love with the queen. She is tall and well-shaped; and on her black hair she wears a small gold diadem."

I looked at Zinaïda. She seemed to soar above us all. Her white forehead, her motionless brows seemed to gleam with the lustre of wisdom and authority. Involuntarily I said to myself, "You are that queen."

"Everyone crowds round her," continued Zinaïda, "making the most flattering speeches."

"Does she like flattery?" asked Lúshin.

"Isn't he unbearable? He does nothing but interrupt. Who doesn't like flattery?"

"One more question," said Malévski. "Has the queen got a husband?"

"I never thought of that," said Zinaïda. "No; why should she?"

"Of course," repeated Malévski; "why should she?"

"*Silence!*" exclaimed Maydánov, in French, which he spoke horribly.

"*Merci!*" said Zinaïda. "So, the queen listens to the speeches, and listens to the music, but she does not look at one of the men. Six windows are open from top to bottom, from the ceiling to the floor; beyond them there is a dark sky with large stars, and a dark garden with great trees. The queen is looking into the garden. Near the trees there is a fountain: it looks white and tall in the darkness, like a phantom. Amidst the talking and the music, the queen hears the soft plashing of the water. She looks, and thinks: 'All of you, gentlemen, are noble, clever, rich; you press around me; you treasure every word I utter; you are all ready to die at my feet; I rule you all. But there, by the fountain, by the dancing water, stands one who waits for me, whom I love, who is my lord. He wears no fine clothes, no jewels; no one knows him; but he waits for me, and knows that I shall

go to him,—and I shall go; and there is no power that can prevent me going to him when I wish to go, to stay with him, to be lost with him there, in the dark garden, amid the murmur of the trees and the plashing of the water.’”

Zinaïda paused.

“Is that what you made up?” asked Malévski, slyly.

She did not even look at him.

“What should we do, gentlemen,” exclaimed Lúshin, suddenly, “if we were among the guests, and knew of that fortunate person near the fountain?”

“Stop, stop!” interrupted Zinaïda. “I will tell you myself what each of you would do. You, Bêlovzórov, would challenge him to fight. You, Maydánov, would write an epigram upon him; or, rather, no, you can’t write epigrams—you would write a long poem in iambics, in the style of Barbier, which you would print in the *Telegraph*. You, Nirmátski, would borrow money of him—no, you would lend him money at interest. You, Doctor”—she stopped—“I don’t know what you would do.”

“In my capacity of doctor, I should advise the queen not to give balls if she did not want her guests.”

“Perhaps you would be right. And you, Count——”

“Well, and I?” said Malévski, with his malicious smile.

“You would give him a poisoned sweetmeat.”

Malévski made rather a wry face, and for a moment he had an evil expression, but immediately he laughed.

“As for you, Voldémar,” continued Zinaïda,—“however, that’s enough. Let us play at something else.”

“As the queen’s page, it would be the duty of M’sieur Voldémar to bear her train when she escaped into the garden,” remarked Malévski, venomously.

I was about to burst out, but Zinaïda quickly laid her hand on my shoulder, and, as she rose, said with a slightly trembling voice :

“I never gave you the right to be impertinent, Count Malévski, and for that reason I beg you to leave.”

She pointed to the door.

“Oh, please, Princess,” stammered Malévski, growing quite pale.

“The Princess is right,” cried Bêlovzórov, getting up as well.

“Before God, I never intended anything,” continued Malévski. “I can see nothing wrong in what I said. It never entered my mind to hurt you. Forgive me.”

Zinaïda looked at him, and smiled coldly. “If you please, you may stay,” she said, with an off-hand motion of her hand. “M’sieur Voldémar and I were wrong to be angry. It pleases you to sting—you are welcome to do so.”

“Forgive me,” pleaded Malévski once more. Recalling Zinaïda’s gesture, I thought that a real queen could not dismiss an impertinent with greater dignity.

We continued our game but for a short time after this scene. We were all made uncomfortable, not only by this scene, but also an undefined but oppressive feeling. No one spoke of it, but everyone was conscious of it in himself and in his neighbour. Maydánov read some of his verses aloud, which Malévski praised in the most extravagant fashion.

“How anxious he is to appear good-natured,” whispered Lúshin to me.

We soon separated. Zinaïda all at once became thoughtful; the Princess sent word to us that she had a headache; and Nirmátski began to complain of his rheumatism.

I was a long time falling asleep; Zinaïda's story had made a strong impression on me. Did it furnish a clue, I wondered; and to whom, to what did she refer? And if she did mean anything, how could she venture—— No, no, it cannot be, I whispered to myself, as I laid first one hot cheek, then the other, on my pillow. But I remembered the expression of Zinaïda's face while she was telling her story; I remembered Lúshin's sudden exclamation when he was walking with me in the Neskúchnaya garden, and the sudden change in Zinaïda's bearing towards me, and I lost myself in conjectures. “Who is he?” These two words seemed to stand out of the darkness before me. It was as if a lowering, sinister cloud hung over me. I felt its pressure, and I waited for something to drive it away. Of late I had grown accustomed to many things, and had seen a great deal at the Zasyékins'; the disorder, the candle-

grease, the broken knives and forks, the sullen Vonifâti, the maids whose clothes had got too short for them, the manners of the Princess herself—all that strange household—surprised me no longer. But I could not accustom myself to that which, in Zinaïda, now puzzled me so much. An adventuress, my mother one day called her. She, my idol, my goddess, an adventuress! That word made my blood boil; I tried to escape from it to my pillow. I was indignant; and at that time what would I not have promised, what would I not have done, only to have been that lover at the fountain.

The blood rushed through my veins like fire. “The garden, the fountain,” I muttered. “I will just go into the garden.” I dressed hurriedly, and crept out. It was a dark night: there came scarcely a whisper from the trees; the air was growing chilly; and from the kitchen-gardens there was borne along a heavy odour of fennel. I went along all the paths; the slight noise of my steps at once startled and emboldened me. I stopped now and then, waited, and could hear my heart beating violently and fast. At last I approached the boundary of our garden, and leaned upon one of the staves. All at once—or was it only my imagination?—a woman’s figure showed for an instant. I strained my sight as far as I could into the darkness, and held my breath. What was it? Did I hear steps, or was it again but the beating of my heart? “Who is it?” I whispered, scarcely audibly. What was that again? Was it laughter, or the rustling of the



leaves? — or the sound of my own breath? I was frightened. “Who is it?” I repeated, still lower.

The air cleared for a moment; in the heavens a strip of fiery light appeared, and a star fell. “Zinaïda?” I was going to say, but the sound died away on my lips. Then a profound silence fell over everything, as is often in the middle of the night. Even the crickets ceased chirruping; only a window rattled somewhere! I stood and stood, and at length returned to my room and my cold bed. I felt strangely excited, as if I had been to a rendezvous, and had been left alone, and had been a witness of another’s happiness.

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## XVII.

The next day I saw Zinaïda but for a moment; she went somewhere with her mother in a hackney carriage. On the other hand I saw Lúshin, who, by the way, scarcely condescended to notice me, and Malévski. The young Count was all smiles, and talked good-humouredly to me. Of all the Zasyékins’ visitors he was the only one who had managed to get a footing in our house and ingratiate himself with my mother. My father did not like him, and behaved to him with almost offensive politeness.

“Ah! monsieur le page,” Malévski began, “I am very glad to meet you. What is your lovely queen doing?”

His fresh, handsome face was at that moment so repulsive

to me, and he looked at me with such contemptuous playfulness, that I did not answer him at all.

“Are you still angry?” he continued. “There is no occasion for you to be so. I did not appoint you page; and it is a privilege to be a queen’s page. But allow me to remark that you fulfil your duty very badly.”

“How so?”

“A page should be inseparable from his mistress; he should know everything that she does; and should even watch her”—he added, lowering his voice—“night and day.”

“What do you mean?”

“What do I mean? It seems to me that I express myself pretty clearly. Day—and night. In the day-time it does not so much matter, it is light, and there are people about, but at night you must be on the look-out for mishaps. I advise you not to sleep, but to watch and watch with all your strength. Remember, in the garden, at night, near the fountain, that’s where you must watch. You will thank me one day.”

Malévski laughed and turned away. He did not, probably, attach any great importance to what he had said to me. He had the reputation of being an accomplished mystifier, and gloried in his power of making fools of people at masked balls. Perhaps he was aided in this by that perhaps unconscious mendacity which pervaded his whole being. He merely wanted to tease me, but every word that he uttered was poison to me. The blood rushed

to my head. "So!" I said to myself, "it appears that my suspicions yesterday were well founded, it appears that I did not go into the garden for nothing. This must not be!" I exclaimed aloud, striking my breast, although I did not exactly know what must not be. "Perhaps Malévski himself comes to the garden" (he had, perhaps, committed an indiscretion, he had quite audacity enough), "or someone else" (the wall of our garden was very low, so that anyone might easily have climbed over it); "only it will go ill with anyone who falls into my hands—I don't advise anyone to meet me. I will show to the whole world and to her, the traitress (I actually did call her traitress), that I know how to revenge myself."

I went up into my room, and took an English pocket-knife, which I had not long bought, out of the drawer of my writing-table, felt the keen edges of its blades. With knitted brows, and a cool, firm resolution, I put it into my pocket, as if such things were neither strange nor new to me. My heart swelled with anger and grew hard; during the whole day I neither relaxed my brows nor opened my lips; and every now and then I walked up and down, clasping the hot knife in my pocket, and preparing myself for something terrible. These new, unwonted feelings, so concerned me, delighted me even, that I thought but little of Zinaïda. My thoughts were perpetually running on Aleko, the young Tsigán, and I kept hearing: "Whither, fine young fellow?—lie down!" and then: "You are bespattered with blood!—what have you

done? Nothing!" With what a horrible smile did I repeat that "Nothing!"

My father was not at home; but my mother, who for some time past had been in a perpetual condition of suppressed excitement, noticed my brooding expression, and said to me at supper-time, "What makes you look so watchful,—like a mouse in the corn?" My only answer was a condescending smile. "If they only knew!" thought I. It struck eleven; I went into my room, but did not undress. I waited for twelve o'clock to come. At last it struck. "The time has come!" I muttered to myself between my teeth, and buttoning myself up to the throat, and even turning up my sleeves, I sallied forth into the garden.

I had already selected a spot from which to keep watch. At the end of the garden, where the partition which divided our grounds from those belonging to the Zasyékins abutted on our common wall, there stood a solitary fir-tree. Standing beneath its thick branches, I could see, as far as the darkness permitted me, what was going on around me. There, too, was a winding path, which had always appeared mysterious to me; like a snake, it wound along by the partition, which here bore traces of climbing feet, to a round arbour of thick acacias. I went up to the fir, and leaning against the trunk, I commenced my watch.

The night was as quiet as the preceding one had been; but there were fewer clouds in the sky, and the forms of the bushes, and even of single larger flowers, appeared

quite distinctly. The first few moments of expectation were very trying, almost terrible. I was prepared for everything, and was only undecided as to how I should proceed ; whether I should call out : “ Where are you going ? Stop ! Confess, or die ! ”—or simply fall on the enemy. Every sound, every rustle, every murmur, seemed significant and strange. I prepared myself. I bent forward. But half-an-hour went by ; my blood grew quieter, my head cooler ; the consciousness that I was doing all this for nothing, that I was even rather ridiculous, that Malévski had been making fun of me, began to steal upon me. I left my ambuscade, and patrolled the whole garden. As if on purpose, there was not the slightest sound to be heard anywhere. Even our dog was asleep, rolled up in a ball at the gate. I climbed up on to the wall of the ruined orangery, and surveyed the wide expanse ; I remembered my meeting with Zinaïda, and fell a-thinking.

I trembled. I was suddenly startled by the creak of an opening door, followed by the slight crackle of breaking branches. In two bounds I was at the bottom of the wall, and stood frozen to the spot. I heard clearly quick, light, cautious steps in the garden. They came towards me. “ It is he—it is he, at last ! ” I said to myself. I tore my knife out of my pocket, and wrenched it open ; red sparks danced before my eyes, and my hair stood on end with terror and hatred. I crouched down, and stretched forward for the attack. A man appeared. . . . Good Heavens ! it was my father !

I at once recognised him, although he was wrapped in a dark cloak and had his hat drawn over his eyes. He walked by me on tiptoe. He did not notice me, although there was nothing to conceal me; but I was so huddled together, and had made myself so small that, I was almost even with the ground. The jealous Othello, ready with his knife, had suddenly become transformed into a schoolboy. I had been so terrified by my father's appearance, that I did not even observe which way he went, and where he disappeared. Only when everything had become quiet once more did I get up, and begin to wonder why my father was walking in the garden at night. In my fright I had dropped my knife on the grass, and I did not even look for it. I was very much ashamed of myself. In a moment I had returned to my senses. However, on my way back to the house, I went up to my little bench beneath the elder-tree, and looked at Zinaïda's bed-room window. The small, slightly-covered window-panes, looked faintly blue by the feeble light of the night sky. But all at once the colour changed; behind them, I saw clearly, a white blind was gently and cautiously pulled down to its fullest extent, and remained down.

“What does it mean?” I said to myself aloud, almost involuntarily, when I had once got back to my room. Was it a dream, an accident, or —— The ideas which suddenly occurred to me were so strange and terrible, that I did not dare entertain them.

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## XVIII.

I got up the next morning with a headache. Yesterday's excitement was gone, and heaviness and irresolution, and a certain sadness, which I had not experienced before, had taken its place. I felt as if something within me were dead.

"Why, you look like a rabbit that's had half its brains taken out," said Lúshin, when he saw me.

At breakfast I looked surreptitiously first at my father, then at my mother. He, as usual, was calm; and she was, as usual, in a state of restrained excitement. I waited to see if my father would not speak affectionately, as he sometimes did. But he did not even treat me with his every-day cold kindness. I considered whether I should tell everything to Zinaïda. It does not matter, I thought; all is over between us. I went to her; but not only did I tell her nothing, I did not even succeed in being able to talk with her as I wanted to do.

The Princess' son, a cadet of twelve years of age, had just come from Petersburg for his holidays: and Zinaïda at once handed over her brother to me.

"Here, my dear Volódya"\*—it was the first time that she so called me—"is a companion for you. His name's Volódya, too. Now, you must be very fond of him; he

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\* Diminutive of Vladímir.

is still rather wild, but he has a good heart. Show him Neskúchnaya, go about with him, and take him under your protection. You will do that, won't you? You are so good, too!"

She put both hands tenderly on my shoulders, and I was quite lost. The presence of this boy made me a boy myself. The cadet and I looked at each other in silence. Zinaïda burst into a laugh, and pushed us together.

"Come, children," she cried; "embrace and be friends."

We embraced.

"Shall I show you the garden?" I said to the cadet.

"If you please," he answered, with the genuine hoarse voice of the cadet.

Zinaïda laughed again. I had time to notice on her cheeks such a beautiful colour as I had never seen before. The cadet and I went out. In our garden there was an old swing; I made the cadet sit on the thin board, and proceeded to swing him. He sat quite still in his new little uniform trimmed with broad gold lace, and held tightly on to the ropes.

"But you had better unbutton your collar," I said to him.

"It doesn't matter, thank you; we are used to that," he answered, and coughed.

He was like his sister; his eyes especially reminded me of Zinaïda. I was glad to be agreeable to him, and yet at the same time I still felt that oppressive sadness gnawing at my heart.



“I am a child myself now,” I thought; “while yesterday——”

I remembered where I had dropped my knife the day before, and found it. The cadet borrowed it of me, and out of a lovage stalk that he had torn off, he cut himself a whistle, which he began to blow. Othello whistled too.

But in the evening, how he cried—that same Othello—over Zinaïda’s hands, when she found him in a corner of the garden, and asked him why he was so sad. My tears ran down in such streams that she was frightened.

“What is the matter? What is it, Volódya?” she said; and, seeing that I would not answer and still cried, she was going to kiss my wet cheek.

But I turned my face away, and whispered between my sobs :

“I know everything. Why did you play with me? What did you want with my love?”

“I behaved badly to you, Volódya,” said Zinaïda; “oh, very badly!” she added, wringing her hands. There is so much in me that is wrong, dark, wicked! But I am not playing with you now; I love you—you don’t know why, or how much. But what is it that you know?”

What could I say to her? She stood looking at me, and I belonged to her entirely, from head to foot, when she looked at me. A quarter of an hour later, I was running a race with the cadet and Zinaïda. I did not cry, but, with my swollen eye-lids, laughing brought the

tears to my eyes ; round my neck, instead of a necktie, was tied a ribbon belonging to Zinaïda ; and I screamed with delight when I succeeded in catching her by the waist. She did everything that she liked with me.

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## XIX.

I should be very much troubled if I were obliged to give a detailed account of all that happened to me within the week following my unlucky nocturnal expedition. It was a strange, feverish time, a kind of chaos, in which the most contrary feelings, thoughts, suspicions, hopes, joys, sufferings mixed together as by a whirlwind. I dared not look into my own heart, if a lad of sixteen can ever do so ; I was afraid to render any account to myself ; my sole thought was to get through the day as quickly as possible. I slept well at night—the light-heartedness of youth helped me there. I did not want to know if I was loved, and I did not want to confess to myself that I was not loved ; I avoided my father, but Zinaïda I could not avoid. When I was with her I was on fire ; but little I cared to know what flames they were that burned and consumed me—it was enough for me to feel their sweet, devouring strength. I gave myself up entirely to every impression ; I cheated myself, turned away from my recollections, and shut my eyes to that which I felt was coming.

One day, on returning from a pretty extended walk, I

was met by the astonishing announcement that I was to dine alone; that my father was gone away, and that my mother was unwell, and did not want to eat, and had shut herself up in her room. By the expression on the servants' faces, I could tell that something unusual had occurred. I did not venture to question them; but I had a particular friend in a young footman, Philip, who was passionately fond of verses, and an artist on the guitar; and I turned to him. From him I learned that there had been a fearful scene between my father and mother (from the women-servants' room every single word could be heard, and the chambermaid Másha, who had lived for five years with a French dressmaker from Paris, understood everything); that my mother had reproached my father for his unfaithfulness, for his behaviour with the young lady next door; that at first he had justified himself, and then had lost his temper and said something cruel about age, which made my mother cry; and that she also mentioned a bill which seemed to have been given for the Princess, and spoke very badly of her, and of the young lady too; and that then my father threatened her.

"All the trouble came," said Philip, "from an anonymous letter—who wrote it is not known—for there was no other way in which these things could have come to light."

"Then, perhaps, there was something," I at length managed to say. My feet and hands were quite cold, and I felt something trembling in the recesses of my heart.

Philip winked significantly. "There was something. You can't hide these things. Although your father was very careful in this affair—you see, if you hire a carriage, for example, or anything, you can't get along without being helped by people."

I sent Philip away, and threw myself on my bed. I did not sob, I did not give way to despair; I did not ask myself when or how it happened; I was not astonished as I was at first, when I was far from guessing. I did not even reproach my father. That which I had learned was as much as I could bear; this sudden discovery had overcome me. All my flowers had been torn up at one stroke, and lay strewn and crushed around me.

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## XX.

The next day my mother announced that she was going into the town. In the course of the morning my father went into her room and remained with her for a long time *tête-à-tête*. No one heard what he said; but my mother cried no more; she was pacified, and asked for something to eat. She did not show herself, however, and maintained her determination to leave. I remember that I wandered about the whole day, but did not go into the garden, nor once look at the Zasyékins' house. In the evening I witnessed an extraordinary proceeding. My

father led Malévski by the arm through the hall into the ante-room, and, in the presence of the footman, said to him coolly: "A few days ago, in another house, you were shown the door, Count Malévski. I shall not enter into an explanation with you, but have the honour to inform you that the next time you pay me a visit, I shall throw you out of window. I don't like your handwriting."

The Count bowed, set his teeth, drew himself together, and vanished.

Preparations were now commenced for our removal to the town, where we had a house. Most probably my father himself no longer wished to stay in the country. But he had evidently succeeded in persuading my mother not to make any fuss. Everything was done without noise or haste; my mother even sent a message, with her compliments to the Princess, saying that she regretted that her indisposition would not permit her to see her before leaving. I went about like a lunatic, and my only wish was that it might all be finished as soon as possible. One thought would not leave me: how could she, a young girl, and a princess, resolve on such a course, knowing that my father was not free, and she being able to marry, if it were only Bêlovzórov? What did she hope for? Was she not afraid of ruining her whole future? Yes, I thought, that is love, that is passion, that is devotion; and Lúshin's words came back to me—"it is sweet to sacrifice oneself for others."

Once I caught a glimpse of something white at one of the windows of the Zasyékins' house. Could it be Zinaïda's face? Yes, it was. I could endure it no longer. I could not leave her without bidding her a last farewell. I seized a favourable opportunity and went next door.

In the drawing-room the Princess received me in her customary slovenly, indifferent manner.

"What's the meaning, my young friend, of your people making off so soon?" said she, providing both nostrils with snuff.

I looked at her and felt relieved. I had been worrying myself about the bill which Philip had mentioned. The Princess suspected nothing—or, at least, I thought so then. Zinaïda came out of the next room, in a black dress, pale, and with her hair let down. She silently took me by the hand, and led me away with her.

"I heard your voice," she said, "and came out directly. You found it so easy, you bad boy, to leave us?"

"I came to say good-bye, Princess, most likely for ever," I replied. "You have heard, perhaps, that we are going away."

Zinaïda looked at me with a weary expression.

"Yes, I have heard. Thank you for coming. I was beginning to think that I should not see you. Don't carry away a bad remembrance of me. I have pained you sometimes, but all the same, I am not what you think I am." She turned away and leant against the

window. "Really, I am not. I know you think ill of me."

"I?"

"Yes, you—you!"

"I?" I repeated with sadness, while my heart throbbed as of old under the influence of her irresistible, indescribable charm. "I? Believe me, Zinaïda Aleksándrovna, that whatever you do, however you may pain me, I shall love and adore you till the end of my days."

She turned round quickly, and, holding out her arms, clasped my head and kissed me with earnestness and fire. Heaven knows for whom that long, farewell kiss was meant, but I eagerly enjoyed its sweetness. I knew that it could never be repeated.

"Good-bye, good-bye!" I said.

She tore herself away and left the room. I came away. I could not describe the feeling with which I did so. I would not wish to ever experience it again; but I should count myself unfortunate had I never known it.

We removed into the town. I was a long time shaking off the past, and getting to work. My wound healed slowly; but towards my father I cherished really no ill-feeling. On the contrary, he rose in my estimation; let psychologists explain this contradiction as they choose.

One day I was walking on one of the *Boulevards*, and, to my indescribable delight, caught sight of Lúshin. I liked him

for his upright, frank character, and he was endeared to me by association. I ran up to him.

“Aha!” he exclaimed, with a frown. “It’s you, young man! Let me have a look at you. You are still yellow, but, at all events, you have got that murkiness out of your eyes. You look like a man now, not like a lap-dog. That’s all right. Well, what are you doing? Working?”

I sighed. I would not lie, and I was ashamed of telling the truth.

“Well, no matter,” continued Lúshin, “don’t lose heart. The great thing is to live an even life, and not to give way to *penchants*. For what good do they do? Whichever way the wave carries you, it is bad; stand on your feet, if they only rest on a stone. I am coughing, you see; and Bêlovzórov—have you heard about him?”

“No, what is it?”

“He has entirely disappeared; gone to the Caucasus, they say. It is a lesson for you, young man. It all comes from people not knowing how to escape in time, when to tear the net. You seem to have had a lucky escape. Take care that you are not caught again. Good-bye!”

“I shall not be caught again,” I said to myself; “I shall not see her any more.” But I was destined to see Zinaïda once again.



## XXI.

My father went out riding every day. He had a splendid English chestnut-roan horse, with a long thin neck, and fine legs, indefatigable and vicious. He was called Electricity. No one but my father could ride him. One day he came up to me in a good humour, such as I had not witnessed for some time; he was dressed for riding, and already had his spurs on. I begged him to take me with him.

"You had better play leap-frog," answered my father. "You could never keep up with me on your hack."

"Yes, I will; I'll put spurs on too."

"Very well, then."

We set out. I rode a hairy black cob, firm on his legs, and tolerably spirited. It is true he had to gallop with all his might when Electricity was in full trot; but at all events I did not remain behind. I never saw a rider like my father. He sat in the saddle with such graceful ease, that the horse seemed to know it, and to be proud of him. We rode along the whole of the *boulevards*, on to the Devitchie Pôle, jumped over several hedges and enclosures (at first I was afraid of jumping, but my father had a contempt for timid people, and I gained courage), crossed the Moskvá twice, and I was beginning to think that we were going to turn homewards, the more so, as my father him-

self observed that my cob was tired, when all at once he turned aside from the Kruimski Brod,\* and galloped along the bank. I galloped after him. When we had reached a great pile of old timber, he jumped quickly off his horse, and, giving me his reins, told me to wait for him by the timber, and disappeared down a narrow passage. I walked up and down on the bank of the stream, leading the two horses, and scolding Electricity, who was pulling at the reins and shaking his head, snorting and neighing, and, whenever I stopped, pawing the ground, and, with a whine, biting my cob on the neck—in fact, behaving himself like a spoilt thoroughbred.

From the river there rose up an unpleasant moisture; a fine rain was falling steadily, and made curious little patches on the timber, of which I was getting heartily weary from constantly wandering round it. I was beginning to get anxious; my father did not come. A policeman, who looked like a Finn, and as grey as the timber, with a huge shako in the shape of a saucepan on his head, and a halberd (what was there to bring a policeman on to the banks of the Moskvá at all?), soon came up to me, and, displaying a worn, wrinkled face, said:

“What are you doing with those horses, young gentleman? I will hold them for you.”

I did not answer, and he asked me for some tobacco. To get rid of him, and also because I was impatient, I

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\* Crimea Ford.

went a few steps in the direction in which my father had gone. Then I went all the way down the passage, turned the corner, and stopped.

In the street, some forty paces from me, before the open window of a wood-built house, stood my father with his back turned to me. His chest rested against the window sill, and within, half hidden by a curtain, sat a woman in a dark dress, talking to my father. It was Zinaïda.

I was aghast. I confess, I had never expected that. My first movement was to run away. If my father looks round, I thought, I am lost. But an unaccountable feeling, a feeling stronger than curiosity, stronger even than jealousy, stronger than fear, kept me there. I watched them, and tried to hear what was said. It seemed as if my father were insisting on something; and that Zinaïda would not agree to it. I can see her face yet—sad, grave, beautiful, and with an unspeakable look of devotion, melancholy, love, and a kind of despair in it—I can think of no other word. She spoke in monosyllables, with downcast eyes, smiling meekly, yet firmly. By this smile alone did I recognise my Zinaïda of former days. My father shrugged his shoulders, and righted his hat on his head—which with him was always a sign of impatience. Then I caught the words: “*Vous devez vous séparer de cette . . .*”

Zinaïda drew herself up and stretched out her hand,—then I witnessed what seems incredible. My father raised his riding-whip, with which he had been tapping the dust

from the skirts of his coat, and I heard the sound of a sharp blow on that arm bared to the elbow. I could scarcely restrain myself from calling out. Zinaïda shuddered, looked silently at my father, and, slowly raising her arm to her lips, kissed the red stripe upon it. My father threw his whip on one side, ran up the little steps, and dashed into the house. Zinaïda turned away, stretched out her arms, threw back her head, and left the window.

Numb with fright, and with a certain terrible doubt in my heart, I rushed back through the lane to the river-bank, nearly leaving Electricity behind me. I could understand nothing. I knew that my cold and self-contained father was liable to sudden outbursts of violence; but all the same I could not understand what I had seen. But I felt that however long I might live, I could never forget that motion, that look, that smile of Zinaïda's; that her image, that image which had so suddenly presented itself to me, was for ever fixed in my memory. I looked abstractedly at the river, and did not notice that I was crying.

"They beat her, they beat her!" I thought.

"Come, what are you doing? Give me my horse!" my father said, coming from behind me. I mechanically gave up the reins to him. He jumped on to Electricity. The shivering creature reared, and sprang forward three or four yards, but my father soon got him in hand; he plunged his spurs into him, and struck him on the neck with his fist.

"Hm," he muttered, "I've not got the whip."

I thought of the whistle of that whip which I had just heard, and of the blow given with it, and shuddered.

"What have you done with it?" I asked my father in a moment.

He did not reply, and galloped forward. I caught him up, for I was bent on observing his face.

"Did you bore yourself while I was away?" he asked between his teeth.

"A little. Where have you dropped your whip?" I again asked.

My father threw a rapid glance at me.

"I have not lost it," he said, "I threw it away."

He bent his head down and thought awhile: at that moment I saw, for the first and almost for the last time, how much tenderness and compassion his stern features could express.

He again galloped forward, and this time I could not keep up with him. I reached home a quarter of an hour after him.

"That is love," I said to myself, sitting at night before my writing-table on which books and exercises had already begun to make their appearance; "that is passion! It seems impossible not to revolt, to accept a blow from even the dearest hand. But I suppose you can do it, if you love. And I,—I thought . . ."

During the last month my father had aged very much, and my love with all its agitation and suffering appeared

to me somehow small and childish and wretched, compared with that other unknown something, as to which I could scarcely form a guess, which frightened me like a strange, beautiful, but terrible face, which you endeavour in vain to scrutinise in the half-darkness.

That same night I dreamed a horrible dream. I entered, it seemed to me, a low dark room. My father was standing with a whip in his hand, and stamping with his feet; in a corner crouched Zinaïda, with a red mark not on her hand, but on her forehead; and behind both of them rose up Bêlovzórov stained with blood, his pale lips parted, and he angrily threatened my father.

Two months later I went to the University, and in half a year my father died (of apoplexy) at Petersburg, where he had just settled with my mother and me. A few days before his death he received a letter from Moscow, which greatly agitated him. He went to my mother, and begged something of her, and, it is said, even cried—he, my father, cried! On the very morning of the day that he was stricken he commenced a letter to me in French: “My son,” he wrote, “beware of woman’s love, beware of that joy, of that poison ——” After his death, my mother sent a considerable sum of money to Moscow.

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## XXII.

Four years passed. I had just left the University, and did not yet exactly know what to do with myself,—at which door to knock. I idled for a while, doing nothing. One lovely evening, I met Maydánov at the theatre. He had contrived to marry and enter the Civil Service ; but I perceived no change in him. He excited himself for nothing, and suddenly became depressed, just as of old.

“ You know, I suppose, that Gospozhá Dólskaya is here ? ” he said.

“ Who is she ? ”

“ What, have you forgotten ? Princess Zasyékina that was, with whom we were all in love, and you too. Out of town, you know, by Neskúchnaya.”

“ Did she marry Dolski ? ”

“ Yes.

“ And she is here, in the theatre ? ”

“ No ; in Petersburg. She arrived a few days ago. They are going abroad.”

“ What is the husband like ? ” I enquired.

“ A charming fellow, with money. He is a colleague of mine at Moscow. You understand,—after that affair—you must know all about it ” (Maydánov smiled significantly)—“ it was not easy for her to get a husband ; there were consequences. But with tact one can do everything. Gó

and see her ; she will be delighted. She has grown still prettier."

He gave me Zinaïda's address. She was staying at the Hotel Demouth. Old memories stirred once more in me. I resolved to go the next day to see my former *passion*. But affairs intervened, and one week, and then another passed ; and when at length I went to the Hotel Demouth, and asked for Gospozhá Dólskaya, I learned that she had died four days ago, almost suddenly, from giving birth to a child.

It was as if something had struck my heart. The thought that I might have seen her, and that I did not, and never should see her—this bitter thought tortured me with all the force of an inevitable reproach. "She is dead!" I repeated, looking vacantly at the porter, and went quietly into the street, going I knew not whither. All the past had risen up at once before me. And that is how it ended, that is what it has hurried forward to, and agitated itself for—this young, burning, brilliant life! So thought I ; and I pictured to myself those dear features, those eyes, those curls, in their narrow box, laid in damp subterranean darkness, not far from me while I yet lived, and perhaps near my father. So I mused . . . but suddenly there sounded in my ears the lines :

Indifferent lips announced thy death to me,  
With indifference I heard them.

O youth, youth ! nothing troubles you ; you think you are master of all the treasures of the world. Grief but



soothes you ; sadness but enhances your charms ; self-confident and bold, you say, "See ! I alone live." But your own days run by, and vanish without a trace or account, and everything that is yours vanishes, like wax in the sunlight, like snow. Perhaps the whole secret of your charm is in the fact, not that you can do all things, but that you think you can ; that you cast forces to the wind which you could do nothing else with ; that each of us, not in jest, counts himself a prodigal ; not in jest, thinks himself entitled to exclaim, "Oh, what would I not have done, had I not wasted my time !"

Look at me. What did I hope for, what did I expect, what fruitful future did I foresee when the image of my first love, re-arising for one instant, drew from me scarce one sigh, occasioned scarce one feeling of despair.

And what has come of all my hopes ? And now, when the evening shadows are beginning to darken my past, what sweeter, dearer thing is left to me than the memory of that quickly-spent storm of morning, of spring ? But it is in vain to blacken myself. Even then, in the days of my light-hearted youth, I was not deaf to the appealing voice, to the solemn sound, that rose up to me from the tomb. I remember that a few days after I had heard of Zinaïda's death, I assisted, drawn thither by a peculiar, irresistible force, at the death of a poor lonely old woman, who lived in our house, lying on the hard boards, covered with rags, and with a sack for a pillow ; her death was slow and painful. Her whole life had been spent in a

daily struggle with want ; she never knew joy, nor tasted of the honey of happiness. Ought she not to have rejoiced at death, which brought her peace and freedom ? Yet, while there was life in her aged body, while her breast rose laboriously beneath even the slight weight of her icy hands which rested upon it, as long as the last spark of strength had not died out, the old woman kept crossing herself and whispering, “ Lord, forgive my sins ! ”—and only with the last glimmer of consciousness did the expression of fear and dread of death leave her eyes. I remember that there, at the bedside of this poor old woman, I feared for Zinaïda, and wanted to pray for her—and for myself.

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## PÚNIN AND BABÚRIN.

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I am now old and sickly, and the most constant subject of my thoughts is death, every day nearer to me. I seldom think of the past, or look back. But at times, in the winter, sitting motionless before the blazing fire—in summer, pacing slowly a shady grove, I recall past years, with their events and faces. But then, my thoughts do not dwell upon the years of my prime, nor even of my early manhood, but rather on my childish days, the budding of my boyhood. At this moment I can imagine myself in the country, staying with my severe and testy grandmother: I am scarcely twelve years old, and there arise before me two beings . . .

But I will tell my story with order and method.

### I.

(1830.)

The old servant Philíppuich entered the room on tip-toe, as usual; with his cravat done into a large bow, his lips compressed so as not to let a particle of air pass, his tuft

of grey hair brought on to the precise centre of his forehead;—he came in, bowed, and handed to my grandmother, on a metal tray, a large letter, bearing an armorial seal. She adjusted her spectacles, and read the letter.

“Is he there?” she asked.

“I beg your pardon, Madam?” said Philíppuich timidly.

“Idiot! Is he there—the man who brought this?”

“Yes, Madam, y-yes; he is in the steward’s room.”

My grandmother fingered her amber beads, and at length said:

“Let him come up. And you, Sir,” she added, turning to me, “sit still.” I naturally sat motionless on my stool in the corner: my grandmother ruled me with a rod of iron.

In five minutes or so, a black-haired, swarthy man, of some five-and-thirty years, entered the room; he had high cheek-bones, and his face was marked by small-pox. His nose was hooked, and from underneath his bushy eye-brows, two small grey eyes looked sadly out. Their colour and expression did not correspond with the Eastern character of the rest of his face. He wore a decent, long overcoat. He remained just at the threshold, and bowed with the head only.

“Thy surname is Babúrin?” enquired my grandmother, and immediately added to herself, “*Il a l’air d’un arménien.*”

“That is so, Madam,” he replied in a muffled, mono-

tonous voice. At my grandmother's first word—"Thy," \* a slight frown passed over his face. Surely he did not imagine that she would say "you" to him!

"Thou art Russian,—and orthodox?"

"Yes, Madam."

My grandmother put on her spectacles, and inspected Babúrin slowly from head to foot. He did not look down, but merely put his hands behind. It was his chin which principally interested me; it was most cleanly shaven, but never in my life had I seen chin and cheeks as blue as his.

"Yákov Petróvich," said my grandmother, "gives thee, in his letter, a good character as a steady, hard-working man. Why didst thou leave him?"

"He and his business require a different style of man."

"A different style? I do not understand." Once more she rattled her beads. "Yákov Petróvich says that thou hast two peculiarities,—what are they?"

Babúrin shrugged his shoulders slightly.

"I cannot tell what he might deem peculiarities. Perhaps he means that I do not tolerate corporal punishment."

"Thou surely dost not mean that Yákov Petróvich wanted to flog thee?" exclaimed my grandmother in amazement.

Babúrin's dark face reddened up to the roots of his hair.

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\* "Thou," if not used to an equal on the most familiar terms with the speaker, denotes the inferiority of the party addressed.

"You do not understand me, Madam; it is a principle of mine never to inflict such punishment upon the peasants."

My grandmother's astonishment was still greater, and she threw up her hands.

"Ah!" she at length exclaimed, leaning her head a little to one side as she attentively examined Babúrin. "So that is thy principle! Well, it does not matter to me. I want thee as clerk, not as overseer. What kind of writing hast thou?"

"I write well, Madam, without faults of spelling."

"*That* I don't care for, either. The chief thing is that it should be legible, and without those new-fangled capitals with tails, which I hate. But what is thy second eccentricity?"

Babúrin moved uneasily, and coughed.

"Perhaps the gentleman means—that I am not alone?"

"Thou art married?"

"Not that, Madam, but——"

My grandmother frowned.

"But I have someone living with me, a man, a comrade; a poor fellow who has been with me now, I think, some ten years."

"Is he a relation?"

"No, Madam, not a relation—a comrade. He cannot possibly cause any inconvenience in the establishment," he hastily added, as if anticipating objections. "He lives at my expense, and shares my room; and he might, indeed,

be useful, for, without boast, he is very well educated, and his morals are exemplary."

My grandmother listened to Babúrin, biting her lips, and with her eyes half shut.

"He lives at thy expense?"

"Yes, Madam."

"And thou supportest him out of charity?"

"From duty; for it is the duty of one poor man to help another."

"Is that so? That is quite new to me? I had hitherto thought it to be rather the duty of the rich."

"For the rich, I would venture to submit, it is more of a pastime; but for one of us——"

"That will do! Very good!" interrupted my grandmother.

After a moment's reflection she added, in a nasal tone (always a bad omen): "How old is thy *protégé*?"

"He is my age, Madam."

"Thine? I thought that he was thy pupil."

"Oh no, Madam; he is my comrade, and indeed——"

"Enough," interrupted my grandmother a second time.

"Thou art, it seems, a philanthropist. Yákov Petróvich was right; for one in thy position it *is* a great eccentricity. Now let us proceed to business. I will tell thee what thy duties will be. With regard to wages—— *Que faites-vous ici?* said my grandmother suddenly, turning her sallow and dried-up face towards me. *Allez étudier votre devoir de mythologie.*"

I jumped down from my stool, went and kissed her hand, and ran off, not to study mythology—but to the garden.

My grandmother's garden was very old and large. In one direction it sloped down to a pond, through which fresh water ran, and in which not only carp and gudgeon disported themselves, but even the far-famed salvelins were there to be found—those fish which are now nearly obsolete. At the head of this piece of water was a thick willow-plantation ; and farther up, upon each slope of the hollow, filbert bushes, elders, honeysuckle and thorns grew thickly, overcrowded at the base by heath and wild parsley.

Here, in the spring, warbled the nightingale ; here, you heard the song of the thrush, and the cuckoo's call ; here, during the great summer heats, it was always cool ; and here it was that I loved to lose myself, in those dark and shady recesses where I had favourite and secret nooks, known—so, at least, I imagined—to me alone.

When I left my grandmother, I went straight to one of these little nooks, which I styled "Switzerland." But what was my amazement on perceiving, before I reached "Switzerland," through a thick tangle of half-withered twigs and green branches, that *another* had discovered it !

Such a long, long figure, clad in a yellow frieze blouse and a high cap, stood precisely upon my most favourite spot ! I edged nearer, and inspected his face, which was utterly unknown to me : a long, flabby, clean-shaven face



with small red eyes, and a comical nose. This last feature seemed to have been pulled out to the shape of a pea-pod, and hung over a pair of pouting lips which, round and quivering, gave out every now and then a clear whistle. At the same time he brought his long bony fingers, placed back to back, even with his breast, and gave them a swift rotatory movement. From time to time he slackened this movement, his lips ceased whistling and quivering, and he threw his head forward, as if listening for a sound. I crept nearer still, and inspected him more attentively. The stranger held in each hand a small flat cup, such as those used to encourage and train canaries to sing. While I was looking at him, some dry branches cracked under my feet; he started, looked with his little eyes towards the thicket, and was about to withdraw, but he just bumped against a tree, gave a cry, and stood still. I walked on to the grass, and he smiled.

“ Good day,” I said.

“ Good day, Bárchuk ! ” \*

I did not at all like being called Bárchuk. What familiarity !

“ What are you doing here ? ” I asked severely.

“ See,” he replied, still smiling, “ I am trying to make the birds sing. (He showed me his two cups.) The chaffinch answers beautifully. The singing of birds must certainly please a youth like you. Please to listen : I will

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\* Young Barin.

whistle to them, and they will answer directly—how charming it is! He began to rub the two cups together; and sure enough the chaffinch revealed his presence in a neighbouring mountain-ash. The stranger gave a silent laugh, and winked at me.

His laugh, his wink, his every movement; his weak, lisping voice; his bent knees and fleshless hands; even his cap and long blouse—everything about him breathed an air of good-humour, and of something innocent and grotesque.

“Have you been here long?” I asked.

“Since to-day.”

“But you are not he of whom——”

“Gospodín Babúrin was speaking to the Báruinya? I am he—the same.”

“Your friend is called Babúrin; what is your name?”

“Mine? Púnin. Púnin is my name. He is Babúrin and I Púnin. (Again he rubbed the cups.) Listen, please listen to the chaffinch—how he does sing!”

The droll at once pleased me “awfully.” Like most boys I was either timid with strangers, or I gave myself airs; but with him, I felt directly as if we had been friends for ages.

“Come with me,” I said to him; “I know a place that is even nicer than this, where there is a seat. We can sit down, and shall be able to see the weir.”

“All right, let us go,” said my new acquaintance, in a drawling voice.

I let him walk in front of me. He rolled and slouched along, with his head thrown back. I noticed that at the back of his blouse, just beneath the collar, there dangled a small tassel.

"What is that you have got hanging here?" I asked.

"Where," said he, putting his hand up to his collar.

"Oh, you mean that tassel? Never mind. It was sewn there for ornament, I suppose. It doesn't matter."

I led him to the bench, and we sat down side by side.

"It is splendid here!" he exclaimed, drawing a deep, deep breath. "Lovely! What a delightful garden you have! Oh, oh!"

I looked sideways at him.

"What a funny cap!" I involuntarily exclaimed.

"Show it me."

"As you please, Bárchuk, as you please."

He took it off, and I was putting out my hand to take it, when I raised my eyes, and burst out laughing. Púnin was absolutely bald; not the tiniest hair was to be seen on his sleek, white, and point head. He passed his palm over it and laughed. When Púnin laughed he looked exactly as if he were swallowing something; he opened his mouth wide, and shut his eyes; and on his forehead ran vertically three rows of wrinkles, like waves.

"Well, it is a regular egg, is it not?" he said at last.

"It is, it is!" I shrieked with glee. "Have you been long like that?"

"Yes; but what hair I *had*! It was like the golden

fleece for which the Argonauts sailed over the depths of the sea."

Though I was but twelve, I knew, thanks to my lessons in mythology, who the Argonauts were ; and was the more surprised to hear their name in the mouth of a man clothed almost in rags.

"You seem to have learnt mythology," said I, fingering his cap, which was wadded, and had a border of bald fur, and a broken cardboard peak.

"Yes ; I have studied that subject, my dear little Bárchuk. In my time, I have done something of everything. But give me back my covering—it protects my bare skull."

He rammed his cap on, and putting up one of his colourless eye-brows, asked who I was,—who were my parents.

"I am the grandson of the present proprietress. I live alone with her. Papa and Mamma are dead."

Púnin made the sign of the Cross.

"The peace of God be with them," he said. "So you are an orphan, and the heir. The aristocratic blood can be detected at the first glance ; see how it runs and plays in your eyes. Sh, sh, sh, sh !" He represented with his fingers the running of the blood. "By the way, does your Honour know whether my friend has come to terms with the Báruinya—has got the place that was promised to him ?"

"That I can't say."

"Humph!" said Púnin. "Oh, could one only settle here, if but for a span! We wander far, we wander near—no refuge for man! The wordly pains are never o'er—the fragile soul is troubled sore."

"Say," I interrupted, "are you a clergyman?"

Púnin looked at me with half-closed eyes.

"And what makes you ask that, my little dear?"

"Well, you talk just as they read at church."

"Because I use Slavonic expressions? That ought not to astonish you. I admit that such expressions are not fit for everyday use; but as soon as the soul becomes exalted, the style should be more elevated. Surely your tutor, your professor of Russian—you have one, I presume—has explained that to you?"

"Indeed he has not," I answered. "While we are in the country, I have no tutor; but when we go to Moscow, I have several."

"How long do you usually stop here?"

"Two months; not longer. My grandmother says that I waste my time in the country. I have merely a governess."

"A Frenchwoman?"

"A Frenchwoman."

Púnin scratched his ear.

"A *Mamzel*, then?"

"Yes," I said. "She is called Mademoiselle Friquet." It suddenly struck me that it was rather ignominious for a young fellow of twelve to have a governess, and not a

tutor : just like a child ! “ But I don’t pay any attention to her,” I added carelessly ; “ I don’t care a pin for her ! ”

Púnin shook his head.

“ O nobles ! the foreigner you cherish,—the poor Russian may perish ! ”

“ Why,” I exclaimed, “ you are talking verse ! ”

“ You are right. I could go on for ever—it is natural to me.”

At this very moment we heard a loud, clear whistle in the garden. My companion at once jumped up from his seat.

“ Excuse me, Bárchuk ; my friend is calling me. He is looking for me. What will he say ? Excuse me—don’t be offended.”

He plunged through the bushes and disappeared, while I remained seated. I felt half perplexed, and experienced another, not unpleasant feeling. I had never met or talked to such a man before. Soon I noticed—but I remembered my mythology, and turned my steps slowly homeward.

When I got back I learned that Babúrin had come to terms with my grandmother. They had given him a small room just by the stables, in the servants’ quarters. He had immediately settled himself there with his comrade.

The next morning, when I had drunk my tea and obtained Mademoiselle Friquet’s permission, I went off to the stables. I wanted to have another chatter with my

droll of yesterday. I walked straight into his room without knocking—for that custom was not honoured amongst us. I did not find the man I wanted, not Púnin, but his protector, Babúrin the philanthropist.

He was in his shirt-sleeves, standing, with legs wide apart, before the window, and was carefully wiping his neck and face with a long towel.

“What do you want?” he said, without stopping his toilet, and frowning.

“Isn’t Púnin at home?” I enquired, in a very off-hand manner.

“Gospodín Púnin, Nikándr Vavíluich, is not at home for the moment,” he replied, without hurrying himself. “But please to consider, young man, whether it is polite to enter another person’s room without leave?”

I, a “young man”! What an impertinence! I grew red with anger.

“Perhaps you don’t know who I am,” I said, not off-hand this time, but haughtily; “I am the Báruinya’s grandson.”

“That’s all one to me,” replied Babúrin, resuming his toweling; “if you *are* the Báruinya’s grandson, you have no right to enter another person’s room.”

“How do you make it ‘another’s room’? Who are you? I am at home here—everywhere.”

“I beg your pardon, *I* am at home here; because this room was made over to me in exchange for my work.”

"Please do not teach me," I interrupted; "I know better than you what——"

"What you have to learn," he put in, "since you are just of the proper age. I know my duties, but I also know very well what are my rights; and if you continue talking to me in that manner I shall be forced to beg you to leave."

I know not what might have been the end of our contention if at this moment Púnin had not come rolling and shuffling in. He probably guessed, from the expression of our faces, that something unpleasant had occurred, and he at once turned to me with the most friendly marks of pleasure.

"Ah, Bárchuk, Bárchuk!" he exclaimed, with unmeasured gesticulation, and laughing noiselessly. "The little dear! he has come, he has come to see me! But let us go to the garden; I have found something there. What is the good of stifling indoors? Come along!"

I followed Púnin. At the door, however, I judged it necessary to turn round and cast a defiant look at Babúrin, as if to say, "Ah! I'm not afraid of you."

He answered in the same fashion, and even blew into his towel, to let me feel, probably, to what a degree he despised me.

"How rude your friend is!" said I, as soon as the door had closed on us.

Púnin turned his tumid face towards me with an expression almost of fear.



"Whom are you talking of in that way?" he asked, with eyes wide opened.

"Why, of course, of that—what do you call him?—Babúrin."

"Of Paramón Semënich?"

"Why, yes; that blackamoor!"

"Come, come," said Púnin, with caressing reproachfulness; "how *can* you say that, Bárchuk? He is a most excellent man; most firm in his principles; quite out of the common run. But he certainly will not put up with any indignities, because he knows his own worth. You must be very civil to him, because"—here Púnin brought his mouth right to my ear—"he is a Republican!"

I stared at Púnin. I was not prepared for that. I had read in one of Kaydanov's manuals, and other histories, of Republicans, mostly Romans and Greeks, who lived in the olden times; and for some reason or other, I had always pictured them in helmets, with round bucklers on their arms, and big bare legs; but I had never dreamed that at the present time, in Russia, of all places, and in the ——— Government, there could be genuine live Republicans. It clashed with all my notions and confused them.

"Yes, my dear, yes," repeated Púnin; "Paramón Semënich is a Republican. So you will know, for the future, how to speak of such a man. Now, come to the garden;—guess what I have found! A cuckoo's egg in a red-tail's nest! Isn't it wonderful?"

I went to the garden with him ; but everything seemed to say to me, “ A Republican, a Re-pub-li-can ! ” “ That is why,” I at last said to myself, “ he has that blue chin ! ”

From that day forth my feelings towards these two men—Púnin and Babúrin—became finally fixed. I felt a certain enmity towards Babúrin, with which there soon mingled a feeling approaching to respect. I almost feared him !—and did not cease doing so even when his former harshness and bluntness to me had disappeared. Needless to say that I did not fear Púnin,—I did not even respect him ; to speak frankly, I looked upon him as a buffoon, but I loved him with my whole heart. To pass entire hours in his society, to be alone with him, listening to his stories, was my truest enjoyment. My grandmother was not over-pleased at this intimacy with a man of no culture—*du commun* ; but the moment I was able to steal away, I ran off to my dear, strange, and amusing friend. Our meetings became especially frequent after the departure of Mademoiselle Friquet. My grandmother had sent her back to Moscow because she had ventured to complain to an army lieutenant, on a visit to us, of the dulness which reigned in our house. Púnin was not only not bored by these long confabulations with a boy of twelve, he even sought them.

How often, seated with him on the smooth, dry grass, in the sweet-scented shade of the silver poplars, or midst the rushes by the pond, on the coarse, damp sand of its

crumbling banks, out of which, strangely intertwined like black veins, like serpents, like spirits from the bowels of the earth, issued knotted roots ;—how often, I say, have I listened to his stories !

Púnin related to me all the details of his life—his fortunes and misfortunes, with which I was always deeply sympathetic. His father was a priest—a wonderful man—but, when he was tipsy, severe beyond recognition.

Púnin himself was brought up at a seminary ; but as he would not stand being flogged, and felt no inclination to enter the Church, he had come out a layman ; in consequence of which he had experienced all manner of woes, and had finally become a vagabond.

“ Had I not met,” he usually added, “ my benefactor Paramón Semënich ” (he always spoke thus of Babúrin),\* “ I should have sunk into the slough of beggary, degradation, and vice ! ”

He revelled in high-sounding phrases ; and if he did not precisely wander from the truth, he had a strong inclination to ornament and exaggeration ; he was amazed and excited by everything. And I, in imitation of Púnin, began to romance, and excite myself.

“ What’s come to you ? ” said my old nurse to me, one day. “ Make the sign of the cross ! ”

Púnin’s stories interested me vastly ; but what especially

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\* That is, as gentlemen speak of each other.—Tr.

delighted me were the readings which we carried on. It is impossible to describe the feelings which I experienced when, having seized a propitious moment, he suddenly appeared before me like a hermit or good genius in a fable, with a thick volume under his arm, beckoning me furtively with his long, crooked finger, winking mysteriously, and pointing with head, eye-brows, shoulders, and his whole body, to the deepest and darkest recesses of the garden, whither no one could penetrate to us, and it was impossible to discover us.

Then, when we have succeeded in escaping unseen, and reached in safety one of our secret retreats, we sit down side by side, and the book is slowly opened, and gives out an odour, then inexplicably dear to me, of mildew and age. With what emotion, what breathless expectation, do I watch Púnin's face and lips—those lips which are about to speak such delicious words. At last the sounds fall on my ear !

Púnin had a decided preference for verse, for sonorous and ringing verse. His appetite for it was ever keen. He did not read them, he rather chanted them solemnly, yet in an alternatively languishing and spasmodic manner ; like an intoxicated or demented man, like a Pythia !

Another habit was his : he began by mumbling and humming the verses over to himself,—this he called “rough-copy” reading ; then he gave a “fair copy” of the same lines, and at once plunged into them, and worked himself up. In such wise we went through together not

only Lomonósov,\* Sumarókov,† and Kántemir ‡ (the older the poets the more they pleased Púnin), but even the *Rossiyáda* of Kheraskóv.§ To say the truth, it was the *Rossiyáda* which I especially liked. There was amongst the personages of the poem a Tartar virago, a giant-heroine; now I have forgotten even her name, but in those days my hands and feet turned to ice at the bare mention of her.

“Ah!” Púnin would often say of Kheraskóv, with a significant shake of the head, “*He* gives no quarter. Sometimes he sends you a line which simply knocks you over! Take care! You try to catch it—but it is gone—it’s far off already! And it rings, it rings

\* *Lomonósov* (1711–1765) was the real founder of national Russian literature. He contributed powerfully to the formation of the language as it now is by his Grammar; and, by his treatises on rhetoric and poetry, created a model of a pure style. His finest poetical efforts are his Odes (his contemporaries called him “the Russian Pindar”); and his panegyrics of Peter the Great and Elizabeth are remarkable for the elevation and purity of their style. His knowledge was universal, and there is scarcely a subject on which he did not write.

† *A. P. Sumarókov* (1718–77) may be said to have brought the drama to a state of perfection, which obtained for it general popularity. His tragedies, *Demetrius*, *Sinav and Truvor*, and *Semira*, are of genuine merit, and contain many passages of true poetic eloquence. His comedies are antiquated in style, and very coarse. He versified the Psalms, and wrote in almost every poetical form.

‡ *Prince Kántemir* (1708–74) was principally a satirist and a translator. His satires are rather old-fashioned, and their charm is well-nigh faded; but their moral qualities still excite admiration. They are philosophical and vigorous, and do not spare the Russian society of the day.

§ *M. M. Kheraskóv* (1733–1807) enjoyed in the past century great popularity; but he is little read at present. To celebrate the liberation of Russia from the Tartars under Ioann the Terrible, by the taking of Kazán, he wrote an epic, the *Rossiyáda*, in twelve cantos. He also wrote *Vladimir* in eighteen cantos, a poem of the same character.

like a cymbal! What a name, too, he has!—one word: Kherrraskóv!”

Púnin reproached Lomonósov for his too simple and careless style; and he was decidedly hostile to Derzhávin,\* who, said he, was more of a courtier than of a poet.

At home, not only was no attention whatever paid to literature—to poetry, but all poems, especially Russian poems, were set down as something utterly wretched and vapid. My grandmother did not even say poetry, but doggerel; and anyone who wrote any was, in her estimation, a miserable drunkard, or a complete idiot. Brought up to such ideas, I must inevitably have turned away in disgust from Púnin's disorderly habits and want of cleanliness, which shocked my gentlemanly instincts, had I not been led away and mastered by him, and become infected with his poetical mania. I even began to read poetry myself, or, as my grandmother had it, to whine doggerel; and, further, ventured to write, notably a descrip-

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\* Gavriíl Románovich Derzhávin (1743–1816) is one of the greatest of Russian lyric poets. He was, indeed, overmuch a courtier, and the atmosphere of Catherine's palace, and the whole tone of the high society of that sovereign's reign was highly unfavourable to poetical development. But as Socrates was said by Cicero to have brought down philosophy from heaven to earth, so may Derzhávin be said to have brought down the Russian muse from Olympus, where she pined in exile, to the plains of Russia, where she breathed her native air and blossomed. Derzhávin is the greatest Russian poet between Lomonósov and Púshkin. His language is varied, musical, rich; his style is flexible and stately. He sometimes rises to great heights, and never sinks really low. He wrote a great many odes (his ode "God" has become famous in many foreign garbs), and produced a large number of comedies and operas. He translated *Phédre* and *Zelmire*; and is the author of several prose essays upon literary subjects.

tion of a barrel organ, in which composition the following distich occurred :

Round the barrel slowly grinds  
And the teeth catch as it turns.

Púnin commended a certain onomatopical excellence in the lines ; but the subject he considered mean and unworthy of the poet's lyre.

Alas ! those trials, those emotions, that enthusiasm, our secret readings, our companionship, and our poetry—all at one stroke was banished. Misfortune came suddenly upon us like a thunderbolt !

My grandmother loved cleanliness and order in all things, no less than a “mechanical general” of those days ;\* so our garden was always kept spick-and-span. For this reason they turned into it, from time to time, a number of landless peasants, either superannuated or in disgrace ; and these were set to weed the paths and lawns, and to sow and mellow the ground of the beds, &c. &c.

One day, on the occasion of one of these cleanings, my grandmother went into the garden, taking me with her. In all directions, through the bushes, on the grass, you saw the red, blue, and white shirts of the labourers ; from all sides came the scraping and grating sound of the spades, and the dull thud of the clods of earth as they were thrown on to the slanted sieves.

As she passed along, my grandmother's eagle eye im-

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\* 1830.

mediately noticed that one of the peasants was not as zealous as his fellows, and lifted his cap as if with reluctance. He was quite a boy, with a haggard face, and dull, sunken eyes. His nankeen caftan, all ragged and patched, scarcely kept upon his narrow shoulders.

"Who is that?" said my grandmother to Philíppuich, who walked behind her, on tiptoe.

"You—which one?—you mean—" stammered he.

"You idiot! I mean that one, who is looking at me like a wolf. Over there; he's not working."

"That one! Yes, yes—that—that—that is Ermíl, the son of Pável Afanásyev, who is dead."

Ten years before, this Pável Afanásyev was my grandmother's majordomo, and enjoyed great favour; but having suddenly fallen into disgrace, he at once turned cattle-driver; and failing to retain even that position, had tumbled down, head over heels, into a smoky hut in the village, with a pud of flour per month, and had died of paralysis, leaving his family in abject poverty.

"Ah!" exclaimed my grandmother, "the apple does not fall far from the apple-tree. Well, I must take measures about this fellow. I don't want people who look at me in that lowering manner."

My grandmother turned back to the house, and took her measures. Within three hours Ermíl, thoroughly "equipped," was led beneath the window of her room. The poor lad was going off to the mines. Beyond the hedge, a few yards from him, stood a small peasant's



telega, containing all his humble possessions. Such were the times ! Ermíl stood, cap in hand, with head dejected, barefooted, and his boots strung together and thrown over his shoulder. His face, which was turned to the house, expressed neither despair, sadness, nor even surprise ; on his lips hovered a leaden smile, and his dried and contracted eyes looked steadily upon the ground.

When my grandmother was informed of his presence, she rose from the sofa, and walked to the window, her silk dress rustling loudly. She put on a pair of gold eye-glasses, and inspected the latest exile. At this moment there were four persons in the room beside herself : the butler, Babúrin, the little Cossack in waiting, and myself.

My grandmother moved her head up and down.

"Madam," said suddenly a thick, an almost stifled voice.

I looked round. Babúrin's face was red, nearly purple. Beneath his contracted eye-brows glittered two small, sharp points. Beyond doubt it was Babúrin who had said—"Madam."

My grandmother looked round also, and transferred her stare from Ermíl to Babúrin.

"Who spoke ?" she asked, in a slow nasal voice.

"Madam," said Babúrin, "it was I who ventured. I thought—I beg to submit to you, that you have acted inconsiderately—in doing—what you have just done."

"Which means——?" interrupted my grandmother, in the same voice, with her eye-glasses still up.

"I have the honour," continued Babúrin precisely, yet with evident effort—"I speak of that lad who is to be sent to the mines for no fault whatever of his. Such proceedings, I venture to observe, bring about discontent, and other unpleasant consequences—from which God preserve us—and are nothing but abuses of the authority with which proprietors are invested."

"Where didst thou study?" asked my grandmother, after a short silence, putting down her glasses.

Babúrin was taken aback.

"I beg your pardon, Madam?" he stammered.

"I ask thee where thou wast educated?—thou speakest so learnedly."

"I—my education——" Babúrin began.

"So it seems," said my grandmother, shrugging her shoulders disdainfully, "that my proceedings do not meet with thy approval? Well, that is perfectly indifferent to me. I am mistress of my subjects, and have no one to account to. I am not accustomed to people offering criticism in my presence, and not attending to their own business. Learned philanthropists among the lower classes are not to my taste; I want servants who do not answer me. As I lived before thou camest, so shall I live when thou art gone. Thou dost not suit me—I dismiss thee."

"Nikolái Antónov," said my grandmother to the head-butler, "settle with the man, so that he be gone by dinner-time. Dost thou hear? Do not rouse my anger."

As for that other idiot, his comrade, let him go also. What is Ermíl waiting for?" she added, looking towards the window. "I have seen him. What else is there to be done?"

She flourished her handkerchief in the direction of the window, as if driving off an importunate fly. Then she seated herself in her armed chair, and turning to us, said morosely: "You can all go!"

We all retired, except the little Cossack, who was not included in the command; he was not "anybody."

My grandmother's order was faithfully executed. By dinner-time, Babúrin and my friend Púnin had left.

I cannot depict my grief, my sincere and thoroughly child-like despair. So violent was it, that it obscured even the feeling of admiring astonishment that Babúrin's spirited attack had aroused in me.

After his conversation with my grandmother, he immediately repaired to his room, and commenced packing up. He did not treat me to a word or a look, although I moved about him the whole time—that is, about Púnin. The latter was absolutely beside himself, and was as silent as his friend; but he looked at me incessantly, and in his eyes were tears which, unchanging, neither flowed nor dried. He did not venture to criticise his "benefactor"—Paramón could never be in the wrong; but he felt feeble and sad.

Púnin and I tried to have a farewell read of the *Rossiyáda*, and even shut ourselves up in a garret for the

purpose—the garden being out of the question—but at the first verse we both broke down, and I cried “like a calf,” in spite of my twelve years, and pretensions to being grown up.

Just as he was stepping into the tarantass to go away, Babúrin turned towards me, and, his face having lost a little of its usual harshness, he said :

“This will be a lesson to you, young Sir. Remember the events of to-day ; and, when you grow up, strive to wipe out such injustice. You have a good heart, and your character is as yet incorrupt. Take care, be warned ; such things should not be ! ”

Through my tears, which streamed abundantly over my nose, lips, and chin, I stammered out that I would. I would remember—I promised—I would do so—indeed—indeed. . . .

At this moment Púnin, whom I had kissed at least twenty times (my cheeks smarted from the friction with his roughly-shaven face) was seized with a sudden enthusiasm. He stood up in the tarantass, threw up both hands, and began to declaim in a voice of thunder (how did he get such a voice ?) the well-known rendering of David’s psalm by Derzhávin—a poet this time, and no courtier :

“Arise, O thou Almighty God, and judge  
The gods of earth in their assembly met !  
How long, your Lord demands, how long will ye  
Continue the bad and impious to shield ?  
Your duty is to obey your country’s laws,—”

“Sit down,” said Babúrin.

Down Púnin sat, but continued :

“ The innocent to protect from evil,  
Some refuge for unhappy hearts to find,  
The weak to fortify against the strong.”

At the word “ strong,” Púnin pointed to the house, and then poked the coachman’s back with his finger.

“ And from their chains the poor to rescue !  
But they heed not ! They see, and do not know.”

At this moment, Nikolái Antónov came rushing from the house, and called at the top of his voice to the driver :

“ Be off ! be off ! Don’t dawdle.”

The tarantass rolled off. But from afar you could still hear :

“ Arise, my Lord, arise, O thou just God !  
O come Lord, judge and punish the deceitful,  
And o’er the earth let one God only reign ! ’

“ What a lunatic ! ” exclaimed Nikolái Antónov.

“ He wasn’t flogged enough as a boy,” remarked the priest, who had just come up to the door. He wished to know when it would please the Báruinya to order vespers.

The same day, having learnt that Ermíl was still in the village, and would not leave for the town until early the next morning, I searched him out. As I had no money, I made up a packet for him, consisting of some pocket-handkerchiefs, a pair of trodden-down shoes, a comb, an old night-gown, and a brand-new silk kerchief. I found Ermíl asleep in the back yard, on a bundle of straw beside a telega. I was forced to wake him. He received

my gift very coldly, not without a certain hesitation ; he did not thank me, but just plunged his head into the straw again, and resumed his sleep.

I left him rather disenchanted. I had imagined that my visit would have surprised and pleased him, that he would take it as an earnest of my magnanimous resolutions for the future,—instead of which——

“Those people,” I thought, on my way home, “are without sentiment, say what you will.”

My grandmother, who, for some unaccountable reason, had left me in peace during the whole of that memorable day, eyed me suspiciously when I went to say good-night to her after supper.

“Your eyes are red,” she remarked in French, “and you carry an odour of the peasants’ hut with you. I will not inquire into your feelings and occupations, for I should not wish to be obliged to punish you ; but I hope that you will cease all these follies, and will once more behave like a well-brought-up boy. For that matter, we shall soon go to Moscow, and I shall engage a tutor ; for I see that a man’s hand is necessary to rule you. You can go !”

We soon left for Moscow.

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## II.

(1837.)

SEVEN years had passed. We were still living a Moscow; but I was then a second-year student, and my grandmother's authority, perceptibly declining during the last few years, weighed on me no longer.

Of all my fellow-students, I was most intimate with a certain Tarkhóv, a merry good-humoured fellow. Our habits and tastes harmonised. Tarkhóv was a great *amateur* of poetry, and even scribbled himself; and in me the seed which Púnin had sown had not been fruitless. As is the case with young men on intimate terms, we had no secrets from each other.

All at once, however, I noticed for a few days that Tarkhóv was excited and agitated. He disappeared for hours; and, a thing unprecedented, I did not know where he went. I had even made up my mind to demand, in friendship's name, a full confession. But he anticipated my question.

One day we were sitting together in his room.

"Peter," he said, blushing joyfully, and looking straight at me, "I must introduce you to my Muse."

"To your Muse? What an eccentric you are!—a regular 'Classic'" ("Romanticism" was then—in 1837—in full bloom). "As if your Muse and I were not old

friends. Introduce me to your Muse, indeed ! Have you been writing any more verses then ? ”

“ You don’t understand me,” said Tarkhóv, still blushing and laughing ; “ I want to introduce you to a live Muse.”

“ Indeed ! ” I said, “ then how do you make her *yours* ?

“ Why, because—— But here she comes, I think.”

We heard the light sound of quick steps—the door opened—and there stood before us a girl of eighteen, clad in a coloured cotton dress, with a black cloth cloak thrown over her shoulders, and a black straw hat upon her fair and rather dishevelled hair.

When she saw me she started, seemed abashed, and was about to retire ; but Tarkhóv jumped up to receive her.

“ Please, please come in, Múza\* Pávlovna ; that is my intimate friend, a delightful fellow—and most peaceable. You have nothing to fear from him. Peter,” he said, turning to me, “ let me introduce you to my Muse. Múza Pávlovna Vinográdova, a dear friend of mine.”

I bowed.

“ But how—Múza ? ” I was about to say.

Tarkhóv laughed. “ Ah, you didn’t know that there was such a name in the calendar ? No more did I, dear boy, until I met this charming young lady. Múza ! What a pretty name ! and how it suits her ! ”

Again I bowed to my companion’s charming friend. She moved from the doorway, made two steps forward, and

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\* The Russian for Muse is Muza, hence the *double entendre*.—Tr.



stopped. She was certainly very pretty, but I could not agree with Tarkhóv, and thought—"What a Muse!"

The features of her round, rosy face, were clearly cut, and small; and the whole of her well-made dainty little person breathed an air of youthful freshness and strength. But a Muse, the personification of a Muse, I, at that time, and not I alone—but all of us young men—imagined to be something entirely different. To begin with, it was absolutely necessary that she should be black-haired and pale! And without a haughty, disdainful expression, a bitter smile, an inspired glance, and a mysterious, demoniacal, fatal "something," we could not picture a Muse, the Muse of Byron, who then reigned over the popular mind. But nothing of this description could you discern in this new-comer's face. Had I been older and more experienced, I probably should have paid more attention to her eyes, which were small, deep-set, with full lids, but sparkling, full of life, and as black as jet: a rare thing with blondes. I should not have discovered in their timorous, glancing look, any poetical proclivities; but, rather, signs of a passionate soul—passionate to self-oblivion. But then I was very young.

I held out my hand to Múza Pávlovna, but she did not reciprocate, and did not notice my movement. She sat down on a chair, which Tarkhóv placed for her, without taking off her cloak or hat. Evidently she was ill at ease; my presence constrained her. She breathed unevenly and slowly, as if struggling for air.

"I have only come for a moment, Vladímir Nikoláevich," she began, in a soft, low voice, which sounded not a little strange from such rosy and almost child-like lips; "but our 'Madame' could not, on any account, grant me more than half an hour. You were not well the day before yesterday, so I thought——"

She stopped short, and bent her head down. Shaded by her thick, overhanging eye-brows, her dark eyes moved hither and thither; just as in the summer heats black, lively, glistening little beetles dart about beneath the tall, dried grass.

"How charming of you, Múza, Múzochka!" exclaimed Tarkhóv. "But stop a moment longer,—we will get the samovár ready."

"Oh no, Vladímir Nikoláevich! How can I? I must go away in a few seconds."

"But you must rest, if only for a moment. You are out of breath, tired."

"I am not tired. . . . It was not for that. . . . Only, lend me another book. I have read this one." She took from her pocket a ragged, dingy, little volume of the Moscow press.

"Certainly; with pleasure. But did you like this one? It is *Roslavlev*,"\* added Tarkhóv, turning to me.

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\* By M. N. Zagóskin (1789–1852). It is a story of Russia in 1812. It had an enormous success, owing, perhaps, to the fame of his preceding novel, *Yúri Miloslávski, or the Russians in 1612* (when Russia was nearly conquered by the Poles. These two are the most famous of Zagóskin's works. His narrative is lively, and he has considerable dramatic power. His books are thoroughly Russian in style and feeling.

"Yes; only *Yúri Miloslávski* seems to me much better. 'Madame' is very severe about books. She says that they interfere with our work. Because, according to her notions,——"

"But even *Yúri Miloslávski* does not equal Púshkin's *Tsigánui*, does it, Múza Pávlovna?" said Tarkhóv with a smile.

"Of course!—The *Tsigánui*," said she, and paused. "Ah, I wanted to tell you, Vladímir Nikoláevich, not to come to morrow; you know where."

"Why?"

"You must not."

"But why?"

The girl shrugged her shoulders, and suddenly jumped from her chair, as if she had been pushed up.

"But where are you going, Múzochka?" asked Tarkhóv plaintively. "Sit down again."

"No, no; I cannot." She moved swiftly to the door, and grasped the handle.

"But take a book, at all events!"

"Another time."

Tarkhóv bounded towards her, but in a flash she was out of the room. He just escaped knocking his nose against the door.

"What a little lizard!" he exclaimed, not without mortification. Then he became thoughtful.

I remained with Tarkhóv, for I wanted to know what was the meaning of all that I had seen. Tarkhóv made

no secret of the matter. Múza was, said he, a *bourgeoise* by birth, and a dressmaker's girl. He had seen her for the first time three weeks ago, in a milliner's shop, whither he had gone to buy a bonnet for his sister, who lived in the country. At the first glance, he had fallen in love with her; and in a few days he had chanced to speak to her in the streets. He believed, further, that she was not indifferent to him.

"Only," said he, warmly, "do not think anything bad of her. Up to the present, at all events, nothing of that kind has passed between us."

"Bad?" I repeated. "I had no suspicion of it. Further, I am certain that you yourself would sincerely deplore any such thing. Patience!—all will come right."

"So I hope," exclaimed Tarkhóv, with a laugh, although between his teeth. "But really, my dear fellow, that girl—she is a type, I can tell you, a thoroughly new type. You have not had an opportunity of seeing her well. She is a wild little thing—and wilful! What a will! However, that wildness pleases me; it is a sign of independence. I am simply head over ears in love with her."

Tarkhóv did not cease talking about Múza, and even went the length of reading to me the beginning of a poem called "My Muse." These heart-outpourings were not at all to my taste; I secretly envied him. I soon left.

I happened, a few days after this, to be walking down one of the avenues of the Gostínui Dvor.\* It was on a

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\* The great bazár at Moscow.

Saturday ; and there was a large crowd of purchasers. In the midst of the crush and hustling you could hear the cries of the shopmen, inviting you to buy. Having purchased what I required, I was only thinking how to escape as fast as possible from their importunities, when I suddenly stopped, in spite of myself.

In one of the fruit shops I perceived my "chum's" friend Múza, Múza Pávlovna. I could only see her profile. She was apparently waiting for someone. After a little hesitation, I made up my mind to speak to her. But before I had time to reach the shop door, and lift my hat, she moved away terrified ; and turning to an old man in a rough cloth cloak, to whom the shopman was weighing out a pound of raisins, she grasped his hand, as if seeking his protection. He, in his turn, looked round at her—and imagine my astonishment ! Who was it ? Púnin !

Yes,—he it was ; with his little red eyes, his swollen lips, and his long, flabby nose. Indeed, seven years had wrought but little change in him ; unless it were that he was a little withered.

"Nikánder Vavíluich !" I called out, "do you not recognise me ?"

Púnin shook himself, opened his mouth, and stared at me.

"I have not the honour," he began,—but suddenly he screamed out : "The Troytski Bárchuk !" (my grandmother's estate was called Troytski). "Is it really the Troytski Bárchuk ?"

The raisins fell from his hands.

"It is," I answered; and, having picked up his parcel, we embraced each other.

He was breathless with joy and emotion; he almost cried, took off his cap—whereby I was able to see that the last vestiges of hair had gone from his "egg"—took his handkerchief from it, blew his nose, thrust his cap into his breast with the raisins, took it out, and again dropped the raisins. I cannot say how Múza behaved all this time; I dared not look at her.

I do not imagine that Púnin's emotion proceeded simply from his excessive love for me: his nature could not resist any unexpected event: he had the nervousness of the humble!

"Come with us, come with us, dear friend," he at length stammered; "You are a student, I see. I suppose you don't disdain visiting our modest little nest?"

"For Heaven's sake don't imagine that; I am, on the contrary, delighted."

"Are you disengaged now?"

"Quite," I replied.

"That is splendid. How delighted Paramón Semënich will be. To-day I go home earlier than usual, and 'Madame' has given her her Saturday. But stop, excuse me, I am crazy. You are not acquainted with my niece, are you?"

I hastened to reply that I had not as yet the pleasure.

"Of course not! Where could you have met her?"

Múzochka! Observe, my dear sir, that this young lady is named Múza, and it is nowise a nickname, but a genuine name. What a foreboding! Múzochka! let me introduce to you, Mr.—, Mr.—”

“B——,” I said.

“B——,” he repeated. Múzochka, remember! You see before you a most excellent, a most worthy young man. Fate threw us together when he was but a child. I beg you to love and honour him.”

I bowed low. Múza, as red as a poppy, gave one glance from beneath her eye-brows, and looked down.

“Ah!” I thought, “you are one of those who turn red, not pale, in an emergency. That deserves to be remembered.”

“Do not be exacting. She cannot learn the fashions with us,” said Púnin, as he left the shop followed by Múza and myself.

The house in which Púnin lodged was situated far enough from the Gostínui Dvor, namely in the Sadóvaya Ulitsa.\* On our way thither, my ex-professor of poetry found time to acquaint me with many a detail of his way of life.

From the time of our separation, he and Babúrin had driven all over Holy Russia, and had but lately, some six months back, taken up their abode in Moscow. Babúrin had managed to get a place as head corresponding-clerk

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\* Garden Street.

in the office of a rich manufacturer. The place was not lucrative, Púnin remarked with a sigh; much work and little pay. But what could they do? They thanked God for it!

"I also try," continued Púnin, "to earn something by copying or giving lessons; only, up to the present time, my exertions have remained fruitless. My handwriting, as you perhaps recollect, is old-fashioned; and, judged by to-day's standard, inelegant. With regard to lessons, my want of fitting clothes has hindered me. I further fear that, in the matter of Russian literature to suit the taste, I strive in vain, and so in want must still remain." (Púnin laughed his hoarse, stifled laugh. He had retained his rather inflated way of speaking, and his knack of rhyming.) "All seek novelty, novelty! You, no doubt, worship the old gods no longer, but have turned to the new?"

"But surely," I said, "you yourself, Nikándr Vavíluich, no longer admire Kheraskóv?"

Púnin came to a halt, and threw up his hands.

"To the highest degree, to the high-est de-gree!"

"And don't you read Púshkin? Doesn't Púshkin please you?"

Again he threw up his hands.

"Púshkin? Púshkin is a snake concealed amidst green branches, a snake with the voice of the nightingale."

While Púnin and I talked in this fashion, carefully picking our way along the uneven brick pavement of



“White-stoned Moscow \*”—which doesn’t contain a single stone, and is anything but white—Múza walked quietly along with us, by Púnin’s side. When I spoke of her, I said: “Your niece.” For a while, Púnin held his peace; then he scratched his head, and confided to me, *sotto voce*, that he merely *called* her so; that she was no relation of his; that she was an orphan discovered and rescued by Babúrin in the town of Vorónezh; but that he, Púnin, might well call her “daughter,” for he loved her no less than a real daughter.

I had no doubt but that, although Púnin purposely lowered his voice, Múza heard very well all that he had told me; she seemed, by turns, angry, timid, and ashamed; light and shade passed over her face, and her whole person trembled slightly—eye-lids, brows, lips, and her delicate nostrils. It was very charming, very amusing, and very strange.

At length we came to the “modest little nest.” And modest it was, in truth. It was a small, one-storied cottage, which seemed just to peep above the ground, with a planked roof, and a row of four dingy windows on the façade. The rooms were very poorly furnished, and not over neat. Against the wall, between the windows, stood about a dozen tiny wooden cages, filled with larks, canaries, goldfinches, and greenfinches.

“My subjects!” said Púnin solemnly, pointing to

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\* *Byelokámennaya Moskvá*—a name sometimes given to the city.

them. We had scarcely had time to look about us, and Púnin had only just ordered Múza to the samovár, when Babúrin came in.

He appeared to me to have aged much more than Púnin, although his bearing was firm, and his general expression unchanged. He was thinner, his shoulders were bent, his cheeks sunken, and his black bushy hair was slightly sprinkled with white. He did not recognise me, and betrayed no especial pleasure when Púnin told him who I was. His eyes, even, did not light up; he just bowed his head, and asked me, in a very off-hand and curt manner, whether my "old grandmother" was still alive—nothing more. He seemed to say: "Your noble visits don't dazzle me; I am not in the least flattered." The Republican had remained Republican.

Muse came back into the room, followed by a decrepit old woman, carrying a badly-cleaned samovár. Púnin, much embarrassed, began to do the honours; and Babúrin sat down at the table, and, holding his head with his two hands, looked wearily round. The tea, however, warmed him into conversation. He was not satisfied with his condition.

"He is a regular slave-driver,"\* said he of his chief. "His subordinates are, in his eyes, sweepings, not to be taken into account. How long is it, I should like to know, since he himself threw off the peasant's garb? He

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\* *Kulák*, lit. a fist.

is nothing but harshness and greed. It is worse than the Government service. All commerce here is based upon cheating, and only subsists by means of it."

Púnin sighed deeply at this dismal speech, and nodded assent; Múza was persistently silent. She was evidently wondering whether I was discreet or a gossip. And if I were discreet, would it be without design? Her lively, restless black eyes moved ceaselessly beneath their half-closed lids. She only looked at me once, and then so enquiringly, piercingly, and even ill-naturedly, that I felt almost afraid! Babúrin scarcely spoke to her; but when he did do so, his voice was gloomily caressive, and not at all paternal.

On the other hand, Púnin did nothing but play with her; but she answered him moodily. He called her, Snowball, little Snow.

"Why do you give Múza Pávlovna such names?" I asked.

"Why, because she is so cold," said Púnin, laughing.

"She is sensible," put in Babúrin, "as a young girl should be."

"We might call her our housewife," exclaimed Púnin. "Eh, Paramón Seménich?"

Babúrin frowned, and Múza looked away. I did not seize the point then.

In this fashion two hours passed, not very briskly, although Púnin made every effort to "entertain the honourable society."

Amongst other things, Púnin bent down before the cage of one of his canaries, and gave the order: "On to the dome! Give us a concert!" The bird immediately flew on to the "dome," *i.e.* on to Púnin's bald head, and hopping rapidly from side to side, and flapping its wings, began to sing with all its might. During the "concert" Púnin never moved, beyond directing the bird a little with his finger, and blinking his eyes. I could not help laughing greatly; but neither Babúrin nor Múza even smiled.

Just as I was leaving, Babúrin astonished me by an unexpected question. He wished me, as a University man, to tell him what kind of man Zeno was, and what opinion I had of him.

"Which Zeno?" I enquired, not without surprise.

"Zeno, the ancient sage. Surely you have heard of him?"

I had a cloudy recollection of Zeno as the founder of the Stoics; but I certainly knew nothing more decided about him.

"Yes, he was a philosopher," I said at length.

"Zeno," continued Babúrin, in a measured voice, "is the sage who teaches that suffering is no evil, for patience overcomes all things; that there is but one Good on this earth—justice; and that benevolence itself is nothing else than justice."

Púnin listened piously.

"These details," said Babúrin, "were furnished me by

a neighbour, who possesses many old books ; they pleased me greatly. You, I see, do not study such subjects."

Babúrin spoke the truth. I certainly did not study them. From the time of my matriculation at the University, I had become a Republican no less than Babúrin. Of Mirabeau and Robespierre I talked with delight. Robespierre, indeed ! Above my desk hung lithographs of Fouquier-Tinville and Châlier. But Zeno ? Where did he unearth this Zeno ?

As he said good-bye, Púnin begged me to come on the following Sunday. Babúrin, however, did not press me at all ; and even hinted, between his teeth, that intercourse with common people, with inferiors, could not afford me much pleasure, and that it would probably displease the "old person." I immediately interrupted him, and gave him to understand that I was no longer under my grandmother's authority.

"But you are not in possession of your property ?" said Babúrin.

"No."

"Very well, then, you are——"

Babúrin did not finish his sentence ; but, mentally, I did so for him : "Very well, then, I am a child."

"Good-bye," I said, and came away.

I was already out of the yard, and in the street, when Múza came running out of the house, thrust a crumpled paper into my hand, and immediately disappeared. At the first lamp-post I unfolded it. It was a note. With .

difficulty I was able to decipher the faint, pencilled lines. "For God's sake," wrote Múza, "come to me after church in the Alexándrovski garden near the Kutafya Tower I will wait for you Do not refuse me do not make me unhappy I have urgent need to see you." There were no mistakes of spelling in this note, but neither was there any punctuation. I walked home perplexed.

The next day, when I was approaching the Kutafya Tower, a quarter of an hour before the appointed time (we were just at the beginning of April; the buds were swelling, the grass was getting green, and the sparrows were noisily chirruping and quarrelling amongst the bare branches of the lilacs), I saw, to my no small astonishment, Múza, some way off, near the enclosure. She was before me. I was just going up to her, when she herself walked forward to meet me.

"Let us go up to the wall of the Kremlin," she whispered with agitation, looking down with half-closed eyes; "there are people here."

We walked up the sloping path.

"Múza Pávlovna," I began; but she interrupted me at once.

"Please," she said, in a low, faltering voice, "do not blame me; do not think badly of me. I wrote to you, I made this appointment, because—I was afraid. You seemed to be laughing the whole time, yesterday. Listen," she added, with sudden vehemence, as she stopped, and turned to me; "listen: if you talk to anyone, if you tell

where you met me, I shall jump into the water, drown myself, kill myself ! ”

Here she looked at me for the first time with her former enquiring, piercing glance.

“ And so she would,” I thought.

“ But how, Múza Pávlovna,” I said hurriedly, “ can you have such a bad opinion of me ? Am I likely to betray a friend, and ruin you ? And, after all, there is nothing discreditable, as far as I know, in your relations with one another. Don’t be alarmed, for Heaven’s sake.”

Múza heard me out without moving an inch, or looking at me.

“ But I have something more to say to you,” she said, again walking forward, “ or you would think me a mad-woman. I must tell you that the old man wants to marry me ! ”

“ Which one ? The bald one ?—Púnin ? ”

“ No, not he ; the other,—Paramón Semënich.”

“ Babúrin ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ Is it possible ? Did he propose to you ? ”

“ He did.”

“ But of course you refused him ? ”

“ No, I accepted—because then I understood nothing. Now, it is very different.”

I wrung my hands. “ Babúrin, and you ! Why, he is about fifty ! ”

“ Forty-three,” he says. “ But that is not the question.

If he were five-and-twenty, I would not marry him. How delightful! Whole weeks pass without his so much as smiling! Paramón Semënich is my benefactor; I owe much to him; he succoured me, brought me up; without him, I should have fallen; and I must honour him for it, like a father. But be his wife! Better die! Better the grave, at once!"

"Why do you talk so of death, Múza Pávlovna?"

Again she ceased walking.

"Well, is life so very delightful? I fell in love with your friend, Vladímir Nikoláevich, from sheer anguish and sadness,—and then Paramón Semënich with his proposals. Púnin, although he is a bore with his poetry, at all events does not frighten me; he does not set me to read Karamzín of an evening, when my head is ready to drop from my shoulders with fatigue. And what am I to do with two old men? They say that I am cold. How could I be otherwise—with them? If they restrain me, I shall run away. Paramón Semënich himself is always preaching, 'Liberty! Liberty!' Well, *I* want liberty also. What does it mean? Everyone is to be free, but I am to be locked up? I will speak to him myself. And if you betray me, or make the smallest remark—remember: you have seen the last of me!"

Muse was in the centre of the path.

"You have seen the last of me!" she repeated, in a hard voice. This time she did not look up either; she seemed to know that she would betray herself, would bare



her soul, if she let anyone look straight into her eyes. For this reason, she never raised them, unless in a fit of passion or spite, when she looked boldly at the person to whom she was talking. But her small, rosy, pretty face, expressed unswerving resolution.

It suddenly entered my head that Tarkhóv was right ; this girl was a " new type."

" You have nothing to fear from me," I said at last.

" Really ? Even supposing—you spoke just now of my relations with him. Even in the event of——" She was silent.

" Even in such a case, you need not fear me, Múza Pávlovna. I am not your judge. Your secret is buried here," I said, putting my hand on my breast. " Believe me, I know the value——"

" Have you got my letter with you ? " she asked suddenly.

" Yes."

" Where ? "

" In my pocket."

" Give it to me,—quick, quick ! "

I handed it to her. She seized it with her hard little hand, stood still for a moment or two before me, as if she were going to thank me ; but suddenly she shuddered, looked round, and, without so much as a bow, ran quickly down the path.

I looked in the direction that she had taken. Not far from the tower I saw a figure, wrapped in an Almaziva

(these Spanish cloaks were, at this time, very fashionable), which I soon recognised as Tarkhóv. "Aha! my friend," thought I, "so you have been warned, since you keep guard over her."

I walked home, whistling to myself.

The next morning, the moment I had drunk my tea, Púnin made his appearance. He came in with a confused expression, began to bow profoundly, looked about, and begged pardon for his indiscretion. I hastened to reassure him. Guilty man that I was, I imagined that Púnin had come with a view to borrowing money. But he confined himself to begging a small glass of tea with some rum in it, seeing that the samovár was still on the table.

"It was not without agitation and a throbbing heart that I called on you," he began, biting his sugar. "I am not afraid of you, but your worshipful grandmother fills me with terror. The condition of my clothes embarrasses me, as I before told you." Púnin drew his finger along the seams of his old great-coat. "At home it does well enough; and it is not too poor for the streets; but when I go into gilded palaces, my poverty overwhelms me, and shames me."

I occupied two small rooms on the entresol, and it would certainly never enter anyone's head to call them "a palace," still less a "gilded" one. Púnin probably spoke generally of the family mansion; though that did not excel in luxury either. He reproached me for not having gone the day before.

"Paramón Semënich expected you, although he vowed that you would not come. Múzochka also expected you."

"What? Múza Pávlovna also?" I enquired.

"Yes. We've got a charming girl, haven't we? Most charming."

Púnin rubbed his bald head with astonishing violence.

"A beauty, my dear sir, a pearl, or even a diamond—and that is the truth." He put his mouth to my ear and whispered: "She has noble blood in her veins, only, you understand, left-handedly. Well, her parents died, and her relatives left her to fate!—that is, to despair and starvation. But now Paramón Semënich came forward—the illustrious, the ancient Saviour! He took her, clad her, warmed her, and brought up the little bird. Our joy has bloomed forth. I can tell you, he is a man of the rarest merit!"

Púnin leant back in his chair, and threw his hands up; then leant forward again, and began whispering once more, but still more mysteriously.

"Indeed, Paramón Semënich—do you know?—is also of high descent, left-handedly too. They say that his father was a Georgian sovereign prince of the race of King David. Do you see? The blood of King David! What a host of things those few words tell! According to another opinion, the founder of his family was a certain Indian Shah, Babur the White-Boned! That is pretty good also? Eh?"

"What?" I asked, "was Babúrin left to fate too?"

Again Púnin rubbed his head.

“Certainly ; and even more cruelly than our little lady. From his earliest youth, his life has been a struggle. With reference to this point, I must confess to you that, emulating Ruban,\* I wrote a quatrain to Babúrin. Wait a moment—how does it go ? Ah !

“From infancy relentless Fate pursued  
Babúrin to the verge of the abyss ;  
But fire at night, and gold midst dust best shines ;  
Behold, his brow with Victory’s laurel’s girt !”

Púnin repeated these lines in a measured voice, almost as if he were singing—just as one should recite poetry.

“That is why he is a Republican !” I exclaimed.

“No,” said Púnin innocently, “that is not the reason. He forgave his father long ago ; but he cannot tolerate injustice in any shape ; he makes the sorrows of others his own !”

I tried to lead the conversation to what I had found out the day before from Múza—that is, Babúrin’s engagement ; but I did not know how to proceed. However, Púnin himself came to my rescue.

“Did you notice, anything ?” asked Púnin, with a sly wink ; “did you notice anything particular when you were at our house ?”

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\* Vasili G. Ruban, a copious Russian writer, who flourished in the latter half of the last century. He wrote many topographical works, and produced a large number of metrical translations from Latin and Greek authors, and some stiff and high-sounding verse of his own.

"But was there, then, anything to notice?" I asked in my turn.

Púnin glanced over his shoulder, as if to make sure that no one was listening, and said :

"Our little beauty, Múzochka, will soon be a married lady!"

"Indeed!"

"Gospozhá Babúrina!" said Púnin; and having slapped his knee several times, he wagged his head like a porcelain Chinaman.

"It is not possible!" I exclaimed with feigned surprise.

Púnin's head ceased wagging, and his hands dropped down beside him.

"And why is it impossible, let me ask?"

"Because Paramón Semënich is a kind of father to the young lady; and because the difference between their ages excludes all probability of love—on her side at least."

"Excludes?" repeated Púnin with warmth. "And gratitude—purity of heart—tender feelings? Excludes, indeed! Please to think for a moment. Muse is a most delightful girl,—agreed; but to earn the affection of Paramón Semënich, to be his consolation, his support, his wife!—is not that the greatest good fortune, even for such a girl? And she knows it. Just notice her, throw a scrutinising glance at her; in the presence of Paramón Semënich, Múzochka is full of respect, of awe, and of enthusiasm."

"It scarcely favours your contention, Nikándr Vavíluich,

that she is full of awe, as you put it; those whom we love, we do not fear."

"There I don't agree with you! Take me, for example. No one could love Paramón Semënich more than I do, I should think; yet I—I tremble before him."

"Ah, you—it is different."

"How is it different? how?" interrupted Púnin.

I simply could not recognise him; he was heated, excited, almost out of temper, and he did not rhyme any more.

"No," he resumed: "I see what it is; you have not a penetrating eye, you don't see into hearts—no!"

It was idle to contradict him; and to turn the conversation, I proposed that we should read something, as in the old days.

He said nothing.

"From the old, the real poets?" he at length asked.

"No; from the modern ones."

"From the modern?" he repeated with mistrust.

"A piece from Púshkin," I replied. I suddenly thought of the *Tsigánui*,\* which Tarkhóv had mentioned the other day, and in which there happens to be a song about an old husband. Púnin grumbled a little, but I made him sit on the sofa, so that he was obliged to listen, and began reading Púshkin's poem. Presently we came to the song: "Old husband, cross husband," &c. &c.

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\* In this poem Púshkin satirizes old husbands who have young wives, not over delicately.—Tr.

Púnin listened to the end of the song, and jumped up from the sofa with violence.

"I cannot," he exclaimed with a deep agitation, which struck me;—"pardon me, I cannot listen any more to him. He is an immoral lampooner; he is a liar—he upsets me. No, I cannot! Let me cut this visit short."

I began persuading him to stop; but he kept to his purpose with a kind of dogged, fearful obstinacy. He said several times that he felt disturbed, and wanted to refresh himself in the air. His lips trembled, and he avoided my glance, as if I had wounded him. In this condition he took his departure.

In a few moments I went out to see Tarkhóv.

With the customary free-and-easiness of students, I walked straight into my friend's apartment without asking leave.

There was nobody in the first room. I called Tarkhóv, and, having received no answer, was just going away; but the door of the next room opened, and my friend appeared.

He looked at me rather oddly, and shook my hand in silence. I had sought him for the purpose of telling him all that I had learnt from Púnin; and although I immediately felt that my visit was inopportune, nevertheless, after a little conversation upon alien subjects, I finished by informing him of Babúrin's intentions with regard to Múza. This piece of news evidently did not astonish him; he sat quietly by the table, and looked at me

attentively, without breaking his former silence ; there came over his face an expression which seemed to say, " Well, what *more* have you to tell me ? Come, give us your views ! "

I, in my turn, looked attentively at him. He appeared to me to be in a vivacious, rather mocking, and even impudent mood. This did not prevent me from " giving him my ideas,"—on the contrary. " You are displaying your strength," said I to myself ; " well, I shall not spare you ! " So I at once plunged into reflections upon the harmfulness of sudden passions ; the duty incumbent upon each man to respect the liberty and person of his fellow : in a word, proceeded to give him useful and practical counsel. Discoursing in this manner, I, for greater ease, walked up and down the room. Tarkhóv never moved on his chair, and did not interrupt me ; he merely drummed his fingers on his chin.

" I know," said I (what it was that incited me to speak was not to myself over-clear—most probably, envy ; it certainly was not my strictness of morals ! )—" I know, that this is no trifling business, no jest ; I believe that you love Múza, and that Múza loves you ; that on your side this is no whim of the moment. Good, agreed ! " (Here I folded my arms.) " Agreed ! Well, your passion will run its course, and what then ? I presume you will not marry her ? In the meanwhile, you are destroying the happiness of a good and honourable man, her benefactor—and—who knows" (here my face expressed at one and the



same time, penetration and sadness)—“perhaps, her own happiness. . . .” &c. &c. &c.!!

My speech ran on for about a quarter of an hour. Tarkhóv kept silence the whole time. This began to disconcert me. Now and then I looked towards him, not only to assure myself of the impression which my words produced, but also to discover why he neither contradicted nor agreed, but sat exactly like a deaf-mute.

At last it seemed to me that there came over his face a change, yes, a genuine change; an expression of uneasiness, of alarm and trouble. But, strange to say, that animated, bright, and laughing expression, which had struck me at my very first glance at Tarkhóv, did not fade from his anxious and troubled face. I did not yet know whether or not to congratulate myself on the success of my sermon, when suddenly Tarkhóv rose, and pressing my two hands exclaimed, hurriedly:

“Thanks, thanks. You are a genuine friend; but leave me now, I beseech you.”

I was amazed.

“Leave you?”

“Yes. You see, I must think over thoroughly all that you have just said. I have no doubt but that you are right—only leave me now!”

“When you are so agitated?” I began.

“Agitated? I?” said Tarkhóv, laughing. He immediately resumed: “Yes, certainly I am. How should I be otherwise? You say yourself it is no trifle. Yes; I

must reflect upon it—alone.” He still pressed my hands.  
“ Good-bye, dear fellow, good-bye ! ”

“ Good-bye,” I replied.

As I went out, I cast a last look at Tarkhóv. He seemed pleased. Why? Was it because I, as a true friend and comrade, had shown him the dangers of the road on which he had set foot—or because I had gone? The most diverse thoughts ran in my head the whole day until the evening—until the very moment that I reached Púnin and Babúrin’s house, for I called on them that day.

Púnin told me, at the time of his visit to me, that the day before I had been expected at his house. Perhaps; but this time I was certainly not expected. I found them all at home, and all surprised at my advent. Púnin and Babúrin were both ill: the former had a headache, and was coiled up on the stove, with a cotton handkerchief round his head, and a slice of salted cucumber on each temple. Babúrin was suffering from a bilious attack; he was all yellow, almost brown, with dark circles round his eyes, a wrinkled brow, and his chin not shaven. He did not look very like a bridegroom! I wanted to go; but they detained me, and even made some tea. I passed a dismal evening. Múza, indeed, was not unwell, and was even more sociable than usual; but she was evidently offended and angry. At last, being unable any longer to contain herself, she whispered eagerly, as she handed me a cup of tea:

“ You may say what you like in that quarter; you

may strive your utmost—but you can do nothing—there ! ”

I looked at her in amazement ; and when I found a favourable moment I asked, still in a whisper : “ What did you mean ? ”

“ This,” she replied, angrily flashing her black eyes beneath her meeting brows, and looking into mine, then immediately turning away—“ this is what I meant : I heard everything that you said there to-day, and have nothing to thank you for, and that you will not have it all your own way.”

“ You were there ? ” I involuntarily exclaimed.

But Babúrin roused himself, and looked towards us. Múza flew away.

After a lapse of ten minutes, she again had occasion to come near me. She really seemed to take pleasure in making daring and dangerous remarks to me, in the presence of her protector and under his nose ; dissimulating just as much as was sufficient not to arouse his suspicion. It is a known fact : to walk on the verge, on the very edge of the precipice, is a woman’s darling trick.

“ Yes, I was there,” whispered Múza, without any change of expression, only her nostrils quivered and her lips twitched. “ And if Paramón Semënich should ask what I am whispering to you about at this moment, I will tell him directly. What is it to me ! ”

“ Be more careful,” I said persuasively ; “ they are really noticing us, I think.”

"Since I tell you that I am ready to tell all! And who is noticing? One stretches his neck over the stove, for all the world like a sick duckling, and hears nothing; the other is thinking of philosophy. Don't be afraid!"

Múza raised her voice a little, and a slight, dull, angry red tinged her cheeks; it suited her to perfection, and never had she looked so pretty. As she cleared the table, put the cups and saucers in their places, she moved briskly about the room, and there was a kind of provoking charm in her free, light movements. "Think what you like of me," she seemed to say, "I shall not alter for you; I am not afraid of you."

I cannot conceal the fact that Múza appeared to me most charming, that evening is particular. Yes, I thought, this little firebrand is a "new type"; she is delightful. Those hands, too, could hit; but what of it?

When I came away she followed me to the door, not from civility it is certain, but simply from malice. I asked her, as a farewell speech, whether she really loved him so much?

"Whether I love him or not, that is *my* concern," she replied; "what is to be cannot be avoided."

"Take care, do not play with fire, you will burn yourself."

"Better to burn than to freeze. And you, with your advice! . . . How do *you* know, pray, that he will not marry me? And how do you know that I absolutely

want to be married? Suppose, indeed, that I . . . What business of yours would it be?"

She slammed the door behind me. I remember that I was rather pleased, as I walked home, to think that my friend Vladímir Tarkhóv might have, alas, alas, many a sharp tiff with his "new type." After all, he must pay one way or another for his happiness! To my disappointment, however, I could not doubt that he would be happy.

Three days went by. I was sitting at home at my writing table, not so much working as thinking of my lunch, when I heard a sound, looked up, and was struck mute; before me stood, motionless, terrified, white as chalk, a phantom—Púnin. He looked at me, slowly blinking his strained eyes, they expressed a foolish fear, the fear of a startled hare; and his arms hung by his side like two sticks.

"Nikándr Vavíluich!" I exclaimed. "What is the matter with you? How did you come here? Nobody saw you! What has happened? Speak!"

"Gone!" said Púnin, in an almost inaudible hoarse murmur.

"What do you say?"

"Gone!" he repeated.

"Who—what?"

"Muse—went in the night and left a note."

"A note?"

"Yes. '*Thank you, but I shall not return. Do not seek me.*' We have been here, and there, and everywhere.

We have asked the cook, but she knows nothing. I cannot speak clearly ; pardon me, my voice is gone."

"Múza Pávlovna has left you!" I exclaimed. "I suppose Gospodín Babúrin is in despair? What does he think of doing now?"

"He thinks of doing nothing. I wanted to run off to the Governor-General, but he forbade me. I was for informing the police, but he forbade me, and was even angry. He said, 'It was her wish.' He said, 'I don't want to restrain her.' He has even gone back to his office-work ; only, of course, he seems to have lost all semblance to a man. He loved her desperately—oh ! we both loved her."

Here Púnin showed, for the first time, that he was not a statue, but a living man ; he threw up his two hands and let them fall on his head, which glistened like ivory.

"Ungrateful one!" he groaned. "Who fed you, gave you water, saved you, clothed you, brought you up? Who exerted himself for you? Who gave up his whole life and soul? And you have forgotten everything! To leave me is nothing ; but Paramón Semënich, Paramón."

I begged him to sit down for a moment and rest ; but he shook his head.

"No, I must not. I just came to you, I don't know why. I have lost my senses ; I am afraid to stop at home alone. Where can I sit? I stand in the middle of the room with my eyes shut and call, Múza ! Múzochka ! That would drive me mad. No ; why do I tell an untruth? I

know why I came to you. The other day you read to me that thrice-cursed little song—you remember, about an old husband. Why did you read it? Did you at that time know or suspect anything?" Púnin looked at me. "Little father, Pëtr Petróvich," he cried suddenly, trembling all over; "you know, perhaps, where she is, to whom she has gone?"

I was confused, and involuntarily cast my eyes down.

"Did she tell you in her letter," I began.

"She said she had left us because she loved another. My father, my little dove, you know where she is! Rescue her; let us go to her, we will persuade her. Have pity! Be merciful! She has killed him!"

Púnin all at once turned red, the blood seemed to rush to his face, he fell heavily on his knees, and cried, "Save her, father; let us go to her!"

At this moment my servant appeared at the door, and stopped in astonishment. I had no small trouble in getting Púnin on his feet once more, and to explain to him that if I really had any suspicions, it would nevertheless be impossible for us to act on the spur of the moment, especially together; that it would ruin the whole affair. I was ready, I said, to try what I could, but would answer for nothing. Púnin made no objections, and didn't even listen; but every now and then he repeated, in a broken voice, "Save her, save her and Paramón Semënich!" At last he began to cry. "Tell me, at least, this one thing—is he handsome and young?"

"He is young," I replied.

"Young," he repeated, wetting his whole cheeks by his efforts to wipe the tears from them; "and she is young; 'tis from that our troubles have sprung!"

This rhyme was accidental, for poor Púnin was not in the mood for poetry. Indeed, I would have given much to hear his high-sounding speeches, or his almost noiseless laugh. Alas! those speeches were things of the past, and I heard his laugh no more.

I promised to let him know as soon as I heard anything positive—but I did not name Tarkhóv. All at once, Púnin gave way entirely.

"Very well, very well, I thank you, Sir," said he, with a pitiful expression; and using a form of address which he never before had used. "But you know, Sir, you must say nothing to Paramón Semënich — for he would be angry: in a word, he has forbidden it. Good bye, Sir!"

As he went out, Púnin, seen from behind, presented such a miserable aspect that I was really astonished. Both his legs were lame, and he stopped every moment.

"It is a wretched affair! 'Finis,'" I said to myself.

Although I had promised Púnin to collect information about Múza, I nevertheless had no manner of hope, as I went to Tarkhóv on the same day, of learning anything; for I considered it certain that either he would not be at home, or that he would not receive me. My supposition turned out erroneous. I found him at home, and even



discovered all that I wished to discover, but without deriving any profit therefrom.

I had no sooner touched the threshold than Tarkhóv walked up to me resolutely and briskly ; his eyes glistening and fiery, his face lighted-up and looking handsomer. He said, firmly and defiantly :

“Listen, friend Pétya!\* I know why you have called on me, and of what you wish to speak ; but I tell you beforehand, that if you say even so much as one word about her, or her conduct, or any course which, as you think, prudence would dictate to me—we are friends no longer, not even acquaintances ; and I shall beg you to behave in regard to me as a stranger.

I looked at Tarkhóv : his whole body seemed to vibrate like a strong, resonant cord ; he seemed scarcely to be able to contain the impetuous flow of his young blood ; and a strong, eager joy filled his soul, and possessed him.

“Is that your unchanging resolve ? ” I sadly asked.

“Yes, Pétya, that is my resolve.”

“In that case, there remains for me but to say : Good-bye.”

His eyes blinked very slightly ;—he looked perfectly happy.

“Good-bye, friend Pétya,” he said, in a drawling tone, with a frank smile which disclosed a row of white teeth.

What else could I do ? I left him to his “joy.”

When I shut the door behind me, I heard another door in the room shut as well.

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\* Diminutive of Peter

It was with no light heart that I sought out my unfortunate friends the next day. I secretly hoped—such is man's weakness!—that I should not find them at home, but was again mistaken: they were both in. The change which had taken place within the last few days would have struck anybody. Púnin was pale and dropsical. What had become of his loquacity? He spoke slowly and feebly, and in the same husky voice; he had an astonished and bewildered expression.

Babúrin, on the other hand, seemed shrunk and washed out. Never over-talkative, he now scarcely did more than utter detached words; an expression of stony hardness had settled on his face.

I felt that it was impossible to be silent—but what could I say? I confined myself to whispering to Púnin that I had learnt nothing; and that my advice was, “Give up every hope.” Púnin looked at me with his swollen, red eyes—the only part of his face where any red was left—mumbled something unintelligible, and limped on one side.

Guessing, probably, what was passing between Púnin and I, Babúrin opened his compressed and almost cemented lips, and said slowly: “Since your last visit, Sir, we have had a misfortune; our pupil, Múza Pávlovna Vinogradóv, finding it no longer convenient to live with us, determined to leave us, of which resolution she left us a written explanation. Not considering ourselves justified in hindering her, we have left her to act as she thinks best. We wish her well,” he said—not without effort—

“and most earnestly beg you not to mention that subject, when you are here, seeing that such conversation is unprofitable and even irritating.”

“So he, as well as Tarkhóv, forbids me to speak of Múza,” I thought. I could not help inwardly admiring Babúrin, for not letting so much as one reproach, or one bitter word fall from his lips! Not in vain did he prize Zeno so highly! I was about to say something of that sage, but my tongue would not move—and it was well.

I left the house immediately. As we parted, neither Púnin nor Babúrin expressed a hope of seeing me soon; both said, “Farewell.” Púnin even gave me back a part of the *Telegraph*,\* which I had lent him. “It is of no more use now,” he seemed to say.

The next week, I had a strange meeting. The spring was early and vigorous; at mid-day, the thermometer showed eighteen degrees of heat.† All the vegetation was getting green, and the plants were bursting through the soft damp earth. I hired a horse, and rode out of the town to the Sparrow Hills. On my way thither, I met a telega, harnessed to a pair of spirited Viatka horses, splashed up to their ears, with plaited tails, and their manes and forelocks tied up with red ribbons. They had on a fancy harness, with brass fittings, and ornamented with tassels; a dapper coachman, wearing a blue waistcoat and a yellow silk shirt, was driving them. He wore a low

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\* A Russian newspaper.

† Réaumur.

felt hat, with peacock's feathers round it. At his side was a young girl of the peasant or trading class, attired in a gay jacket of gold tissue, and with a large dove-coloured kerchief over her head. She was laughing heartily; the driver was laughing also.

I drew my horse to the side of the road, and was not paying particular attention to the merry couple, when suddenly the man called to his horses, and I recognised the voice of Tarkhóv! I looked at him. Yes, it was he—he without a doubt—dressed as a coachman; and was not that Múza beside him? But at this moment the horses started off at a great pace, and passed out of sight. I was going to gallop after them; but my horse was an old hired hack, which went at what is called a general's pace: its gallop was slower than its trot.

“Drive away, my dear friends!” I muttered between my teeth. I must observe that I had not seen Tarkhóv during the whole week, though I had called three times on him. He was never in. Neither had I seen Púnin or Babúrin. I had not visited them. I caught cold during my promenade; for although the sun was hot, the wind was very searching. I was dangerously ill, and when I was convalescent I went to the country with my grandmother, and was turned into the fields by doctor's orders. I did not return to Moscow, but went to the University of St. Petersburg.

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## III.

(1849.)

NOT seven, but twelve whole years passed, and I was in my thirty-second year. My grandmother had been long dead, and I held a post in the Ministry of the Interior. Tarkhóv and I had lost sight of each other; he had entered the army and was nearly always in the provinces. We had had two friendly, pleasant meetings. At the time of the last, he was, as far as I can remember, already married. One day, during the great summer heats, I was walking down the Gorókhovaya Ulitsa, cursing my official duties which kept me in Petersburg, and the closeness, the smells and the dust of the city. All at once I was stopped by a funeral. It consisted of a hearse only, *i.e.* speaking correctly, of a ramshackle cart, upon which, roughly jolted by the inequalities of the road, shook a miserable deal coffin, half-covered by a shabby black cloth. An old white-haired man followed alone.

I looked at him, his face was known to me. He also looked at me. Good Heavens! it was Babúrin!

Hat in hand I went up to him, mentioned my name, and walked by his side.

"Whom are you burying?" I asked.

"Nikáedr Vavíluich Púnin," he answered.

I had a presentiment, I knew beforehand that he would say that name, but all the same my heart was in my mouth. I was much affected, yet glad that chance had enabled me to fulfil this last duty to my instructor.

"Can I accompany you, Paramón Semënich?" I asked.

"Yes. I was following alone, now we shall be two."

Our walk lasted more than an hour. My companion seemed greatly moved; he never looked up nor opened his lips. Since I last saw him, he had become an old man; his copper-coloured face, furrowed by wrinkles, was thrown into relief by his white hair. Babúrin's whole person bore traces of a laborious and hard life—of a perpetual struggle—poverty and want had worn him out.

When all was over, when that which was once Púnin had been for all eternity laid in the damp, the terribly damp ground of the Smolensk cemetery, Babúrin stood some moments with head downcast and uncovered before the newly-raised mound of sandy clay. He then turned towards me his weary, and, so to say, hardened face, his dried, hollow eyes, thanked me sadly, and was about to move away, but I detained him.

"Where are you living, Paramón Semënich? Allow me to visit you. I did not know at all that you were in St. Petersburg. We will talk of the past and our dead friend."

Babúrin did not answer immediately.

"I have been here for three years," he said at length;

"I live at the other end of the town. But, after all, if you really desire to see me, come." He gave me his address. "Come in the evening, we are always at home then, both of us."

"Both?"

"I am married. My wife is not quite well to-day; that is why she did not come to the funeral. However, it is quite enough if *one* fulfils that empty formality; it is a mere custom. And who, indeed, believes in all of it?"

I was somewhat astonished at these last words, but said nothing. I called a cab and offered to set Babúrin down at his house, but he refused.

On the same evening I set out for his house. On the way my whole thoughts were of Púnin. I recalled how I had first met him, how enthusiastic and droll he then was; how, later, at Moscow, he had toned down, especially at our last meeting; and now, he had made his last reckoning with life—she is not to be trifled with! Babúrin lodged on the Vuiborg side of Petersburg, at a little house which reminded me of the "nest" at Moscow; but was almost more modest still.

When I entered the room he was sitting in a corner, with his hands upon his knees; a half-burnt tallow candle dimly revealed his downcast snowy head. He heard my steps, trembled a little, and received me more cordially than I expected. In a few moments his wife appeared. I immediately recognized Múza, and then understood why

Babúrin had invited me ; he wished to show me that he had attained his object after all.

Múza had greatly changed, in face, voice, and movements ; but her eyes had changed more than all. Once upon a time they darted here and there, like beetles, those wicked, beautiful eyes ; they flashed furtively, but brightly ; their glance pierced like a needle. But now they were steady and peaceful, and fixed in their expression, their black pupils were dimmed. "I am broken and quiet—I am good," seemed to say their tranquil veiled glance. Her perpetual meek smile expressed the same sentiment. She was also quietly dressed, in a drab gown with white spots on it.

She made the first advance, and asked whether I recognised her. She evidently felt no confusion, not because she had lost her modesty or had forgotten the past, but simply because her vanity had left her. She talked to me of Púnin, placidly and coolly. I learnt that he had, in the last few years, become quite infirm and almost childish, to the extent that he was dull without playthings ; it is true that they assured him that the toys which he sewed up from old rags were saleable, so he took pleasure in them. His passion for poetry did not fade, and verses were all that he could remember. Even a few days before his death he had declaimed some of the "Rossyáda" ; but Púshkin he feared, as children do wolves. His devotion to Babúrin, also, had not diminished ; as of old, he always assumed a respectful attitude towards him, and



even when he was seized with the darkness and chill of his last hour he slowly gurgled out the word "Benefactor!" I further learnt from Múza, that soon after the events of Moscow, Babúrin had once more set out on a wandering over Russia, going from employment to employment; that in St. Petersburg he had again obtained a post in an office, which, however, he had been obliged to relinquish a few days back, on account of an unpleasantness with his employer. Babúrin had thought fit to take sides with the working classes. Múza's perpetual smile which accompanied her conversation led me to sad reflections; it confirmed the impression produced upon me by Babúrin's behaviour. They both gained their daily bread with difficulty, of that there could be no doubt. He took but little part in the conversation, and seemed more embarrassed than displeased. Something was worrying him.

"If you please, Paramón Semënich," said the cook, suddenly appearing at the door.

"What is the matter? What do you want?" asked he anxiously.

"If you please," repeated the cook significantly and persistently.

Babúrin buttoned up his coat and left the room.

When I was left alone with Múza, she looked at me with a somewhat different expression; her voice, too, was changed, and she no longer smiled.

"I do not know, Pëtr Petróvich," she began, "what you now think of me; but I fancy you recollect what I

was—self-confident, gay, and not good, wishing to live just as I pleased. But now I will tell you something: when I was cast off, and almost lost, and prayed that either God would gather me to him, or that I might receive strength to put an end to my life, I again met Paramón Semënich, at Vorónezh, and again he came to my rescue. Not a single harsh word, not a single reproach did I hear, and he asked no questions—I was not worth them; but he loved me, and I became his wife. That is all.”

The conversation now turned upon ordinary topics. Múza told me that Púnin had left a cat, of which he was very fond; and that from the moment of his death it had taken refuge in a garret, and remained there, doing nothing but mew, as though it were calling someone. The neighbours were very much frightened, and said that Púnin’s soul had passed into the cat.

“Paramón Semënich seems rather anxious,” I remarked at length.

“You noticed that?” Múza sighed. “It is impossible for him not to be so. Needless to say he has remained faithful to his convictions, and the present order of things can only strengthen them. (Múza expressed herself quite differently from what she did at Moscow; her language had assumed a literary, a bookish tinge.) But I scarcely know whether I ought to trust you, or how you will receive——”

“Why do you think that I am not to be trusted?”

“Well, you are in the Civil Service, a chinóvnik.”

“And what of that?”

“Why, you are consequently on the side of the Government.”

I could not help wondering at the simplicity of Múza.

“I shall not dilate,” I said, “upon my relations towards the Government, which does not even know of my existence; but I can assure you that you may set your mind at rest. I shall not turn your confidence to a bad account. I sympathise with your husband’s sentiments more than you imagine.”

Múza shook her head.

“Ah! that is all very well,” she began, not without hesitation; “but the thing is this: the opinions of Paramón Seménich will soon lead to action, they cannot any longer be kept under a bushel. He has associates from whom it is now impossible to separate——”

Múza suddenly stopped as if she had bitten her tongue. Her last words had astonished and alarmed me not a little. Probably my face expressed what I felt, and she noticed that.

I have already said that the meeting of which I am writing took place in 1849. Many still remember how troubled and difficult was that period, and what occurrences marked it at St. Petersburg. I myself was struck by certain peculiarities in Babúrin’s circumstances, and in his general behaviour. Twice he spoke with such anger and bitterness of the arrangements of the Government, and of persons in high places, that I felt a certain perplexity.

“ Well,” he asked me suddenly, “ have you emancipated your peasants ? ”

I was obliged to allow that I had not.

“ But your grandmother is dead, isn't she ? ”

I was forced to confess that that was so.

“ That is just like you, my lords,” Babúrin muttered between his teeth.

In the most conspicuous part of his room hung a lithograph representing Byéliniski ; on the table lay a small volume of Bestúzhev's old “ Pole Star.”

A long time after the cook had called him, Babúrin had not returned. Múza looked uneasily once or twice towards the door by which he had gone out. At last she lost patience, got up, and, excusing herself, went out by the same door. They both came back in a quarter of an hour. Their faces, so at least it appeared to me, bore a disturbed expression. Múza had even become pale. Not wishing to inconvenience them, I had got up to go, and had already said good-bye, when suddenly the door of the next room opened and a head appeared. It was not the cook's, but a dishevelled head of a terrified young man.

“ Babúrin,—a terrible thing . . . ! ” he cried in haste, and immediately shut the door again at the sight of my strange face.

Babúrin rushed out after him. I pressed Múza's hand and left, my heart full of dismal misgivings.

“ Come to-morrow,” she whispered anxiously.

"I will come without fail," I replied.

The next morning I was still in bed when my servant handed me a letter from Múza.

"Gospodín Pëtr Petróvich," she wrote, "the police arrested Paramón Semënich last night, and took him to prison, or I know not where, they did not say. All our papers were torn open, many of them they sealed up and took with them. They say that in the town an enormous quantity of people have been arrested. You can imagine what I feel. It is fortunate that Nikándr Vavíluich did not live to see this. He left us in time. Advise me what to do. For myself I do not fear. I shall not die of hunger; but the thought of my husband gives me no peace. Please come, if you are not afraid of calling on people in our plight.

"Your obedient servant,

"MÚZA BABÚRINA."

I was with her within half-an-hour. When she saw me she gave me her hand, and, although she said not a word, an expression of gratitude passed over her face. She had on yesterday's clothes, and everything showed that she had not been to bed, and had not slept the whole night. She did not cry, she had no time. She was for action; she wanted to struggle with the misfortune which had come upon her. The self-willed, energetic Múza of former days arose in her. She had no time to waste in

indignant speeches, although indignation was choking her. How to rescue Babúrin; to whom to have recourse to lighten his lot: these were her only thoughts. She wanted immediately to go—to beg—to demand something. But whither to go? Of whom to beg? What to demand? That is what she wished to hear from me, what she wished to consult about with me.

I began by advising patience. At first there was nothing to be done except wait, and, as far as possible, prosecute enquiries. To take any decided step then, when the affair had hardly begun, would have been simply senseless and ill-judged. Neither would it have been prudent to count on success even had I commanded a much greater share of influence and importance than I did—I, an insignificant chinóvnik. Múza herself had no protection.

It was no easy matter to persuade her of all this, but at length she understood my reasoning; she understood, also, that I was guided by no egotistical sentiments when I showed her the fruitlessness of all endeavours.

“But tell me, Múza Pávlovna,” I said, when she had finally sat down (hitherto she had remained on her feet, as if in readiness to straightway go and rescue Babúrin), “how Paramón Semënich, at his age, got into such a scrape? I feel assured that only young men, after the fashion of that one who came in last night to warn you, are implicated.”

“Those young men are our friends!” exclaimed Múza, her eyes flashing and moving as of yore. A kind of

unrestrained strength seemed to rise from the depths of her soul, and I suddenly remembered the name of "new type," which had been given her by Tarkhóv. "The age does not matter, when it is a question of political opinions." Múza especially emphasised the last two words. I could not help thinking that, despite her grief, she took a certain pleasure in showing herself to me in this new and unexpected character—as a cultivated and mature woman, the worthy wife of a Republican! "Some old men," she proceeded, "are younger than some young ones, and more ready to sacrifice themselves. But that is beside the question."

"It seems to me, Múza Pávlovna," I remarked, "that you are slightly exaggerating. Knowing the character of your husband, I felt certain beforehand that he would sympathise with every honourable movement; but, on the other hand, I have always reckoned him a prudent man. Is it possible that he did not perceive the utter impracticability, the utter hopelessness, of a conspiracy here—in Russia! For a man of his position, his class——"

"Certainly," interrupted Múza, with warmth; "he is a plebeian; and in Russia, it is only noblemen who are allowed to conspire, as, for example, on the 24th of December\*—that is what you meant to say."

"Then why do you complain?" was just on my tongue, but I kept the retort to myself. "Do you think, then, the

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\* 1825.

result of the 24th of December of such a nature as to encourage other conspiracies ? ”

Múza frowned. “ There is no talking with you on these matters,” her clouded face seemed to say.

“ Is Paramón Semënich very much compromised ? ” I ventured at length to ask.

Múza did not answer.

At this moment, a dismal, wild mewling sounded in the garret.

Múza shuddered. “ Ah ! ” she sighed, almost despairingly, “ it is well that Nikándr Vavíluich did not see this. He did not see how, in the night, they seized by force his benefactor, our benefactor ; the best, perhaps, and most honest man, on the face of the earth,—how they spoke to the honourable old man, and said *thou* to him,—how they threatened him, and what they threatened!—simply because he was not a noble. That boy of an officer, too, was no doubt one of those unscrupulous, soulless persons, such as I, in my life——”

Múza’s voice broke down, and she trembled like a leaf. Her long-contained indignation at last burst forth. Aroused and called to the surface by the agitation of her mind, the recollections of the past crowded in upon her. At this moment, I felt thoroughly assured that the “ new type ” had remained unchanged—the same passionate and impulsive woman. Only her impulses did not proceed from the same causes as of old, in her young days. That which I had at first taken, and rightly, for



resignation and peacefulness—that quiet, dulled glance, that chilly voice, that calm simplicity—all bore relation to the past, the inevitable.

Now, the Present was speaking.

I did my utmost to calm Muse, and to bring our conversation on to more practical ground. It was necessary to take some immediate measures : to discover, first of all, where Babúrin was detained ; and then to obtain for him and Múza means of subsistence. All this represented no small amount of trouble ; it was not a question of getting money, but work, which, as is well known, is a much more complicated problem.

I left Múza, with a whole brood of plans in my head. I soon learnt that Babúrin was in the fortress.

The affair began, and dragged slowly along. I saw Múza two or three times each week, and she had a few interviews with her husband. At the very end of this sad business, however, I was not at St. Petersburg. Some unforeseen circumstances had forced me to journey to the south of Russia. During my absence, I learnt that Babúrin had been acquitted by the court ; but that he had been directed, by an administrative order, to take up his residence in one of the western governments of Siberia. Múza had gone with him.

“Paramón Semënich did not wish it,” she wrote to me ; “because, in his opinion, it is not right for one to sacrifice himself for another—but for the cause ; but I told him that it was no sacrifice. When I promised him at Moscow

that I would be his wife, I thought to myself: 'It is for ever, and indissolubly!' And indissoluble the tie must be to the end of all time."

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#### IV.

(1861.)

Another twelve years went by. Everybody in Russia knows, and will for ever remember, what took place between the years 1849 and 1861. In my own private existence, a great many changes, on which there is no occasion to dilate, had taken place. New interests and new cares had grown up. My solicitude for the Babúrins had faded into the background, and finally disappeared altogether. Nevertheless I continued to correspond with Múza—at very long intervals, it is true; sometimes more than a year passed without my receiving any news of her or her husband. I learnt that soon after 1855 he had been allowed to return to Russia; but that he had preferred remaining in his small Siberian town, where fate had placed him, and where, apparently, he had built himself a nest, and a retreat, and found a sphere of activity.

But at the end of March 1861 I received the following letter from Múza:—

"It is so long since I have written to you, most honoured Pëtr Petróvich, that I do not even know whether you are alive or not; or whether, if alive you

be, you have not forgotten our existence. Never mind ; I cannot help writing to you to-day. Hitherto, everything had gone on in the old groove ; Paramón Semënich and I occupied ourselves with our schools, which progress slowly ; further, my husband passed his time in reading and writing, and his customary discussions with the old-believers, church-people, and Polish exiles ; his health was fairly good—and mine also.

“ But yesterday, we got the Proclamation of the 19th of February ! \* Long had we waited for it ; for a long time rumours had reached us of what was doing at Petersburg—but still, I cannot describe to you what took place when it came ! You know my husband well ; misfortune has not changed him an atom,—on the contrary, he is still more resolute and energetic. He has an iron will, but even he could not withstand it. As he read it, his hands shook ; he embraced and kissed me three times, and tried to speak, — but no ! he could not, and he ended by crying, a strange thing to see, and suddenly cried out : ‘ Hurrah ! hurrah ! God save the Tsar ! ’ Yes, Pëtr Petróvich, those were his words. Then he added : ‘ Now, I can die. It is the first step,—which must be followed by others. ’ Then, as he was, he ran bare-headed to tell this great piece of news to our friends. There was a strong frost on the ground, and the snow was beginning to drift ; but he would not listen to my endeavours to retain him. When he came back, he was a

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\* Proclaiming the Emancipation of the Serfs.

mass of snow : hair, face, and beard—which now reaches to his breast—and even the tears on his cheeks were frozen. But he was very lively and merry, and made me open a bottle of Don champagne, and drink with our friends, whom he had brought with him, to the health of the Tsar, Russia, and all the free Russians. Then, glass in hand, he looked to the ground and said : ‘Nikándr, Nikándr, do you hear? There are no more slaves in Russia! Rejoice in your grave, old comrade!’ He said many more things of the same kind ; and that what he had waited for had come to pass. I cannot remember all, but I know that I have not seen him so happy for a long time. So I resolved to write to let you see how glad and merry we were in our far-distant Siberian wilderness—also that you might rejoice with us.”

This letter I received at the end of March ; and at the beginning of May came another very short letter from Muse. She informed me that her husband, Paramón Semënich Babúrin, having caught cold on the very day of arrival of the Proclamation, died, on the 12th of April, from inflammation of the lungs, at the age of sixty-seven. She added that she had determined to remain where his body rested, and to continue the task which he had bequeathed to her, because that was the last wish of Paramón Semënich—and she knew no other law.

From that time I have heard no more of Múza.

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